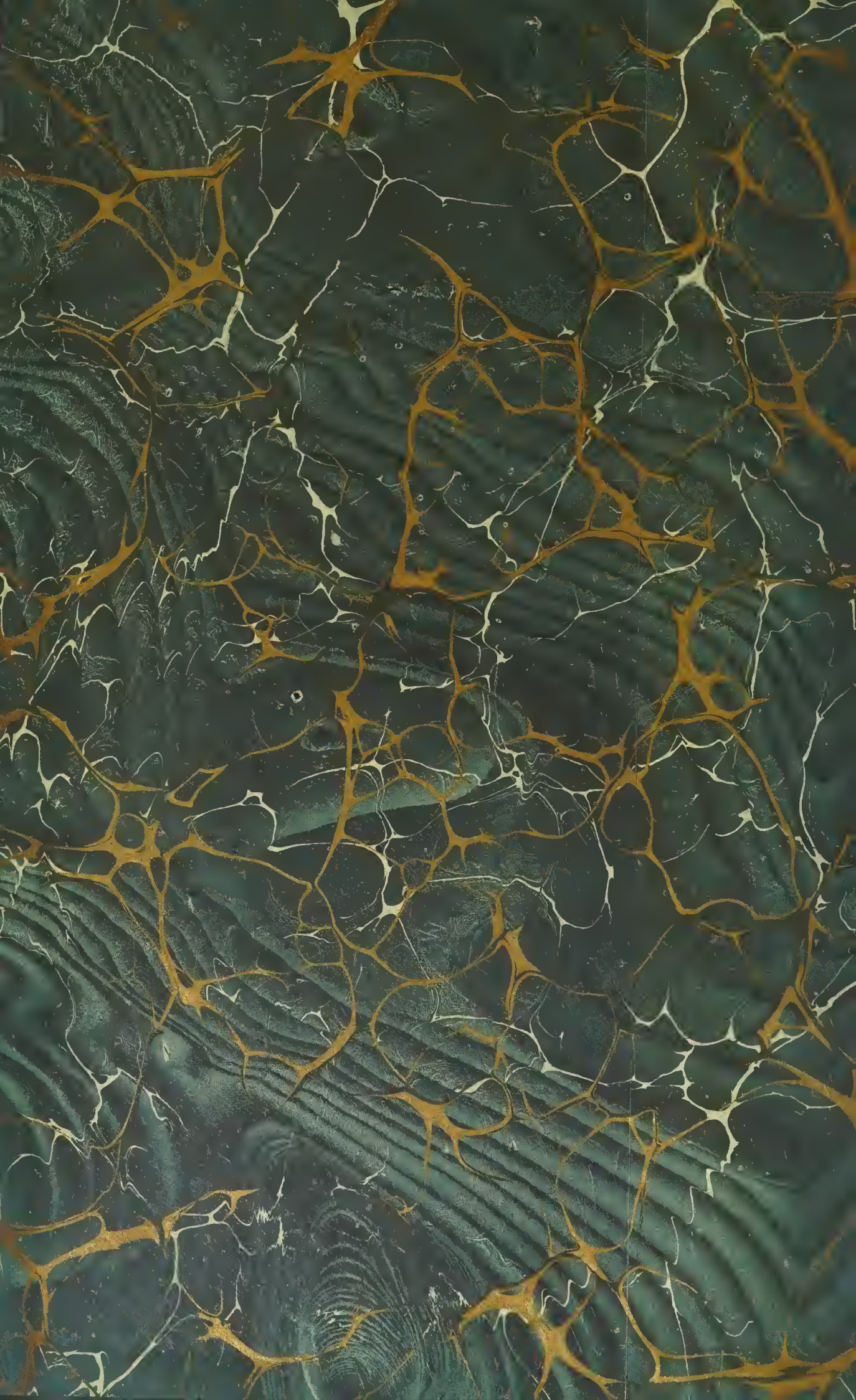

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The Theatre.

A MONTHLY REVIEW AND MAGAZINE.

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The Theatre.

AUGUST 1, 1878.

OUR STAGE: ITS PRESENT AND ITS PROBABLE FUTURE.

IT is always difficult to stand sufficiently far apart from current events in which we are deeply interested to gain any definite and trustworthy view of their signification and their relative value. To form an accurate estimate of the rate and of the direction in which we are moving is harder still. We are, for the most part, conscious only that, by some force not belonging to us as individuals, we are being either rapidly whirled or slowly dragged along whither we cannot tell; we are like travellers ignorant of their destination, who attempt to determine by studying the features of the passing landscape the place whereto they are journeying, and the pace at which their journey is being made. Yet the effort is one which it is at once natural and useful to make. We cannot but recognise the fact that whatever we are doing, in politics, in science, in commerce, or in art, we are never standing still, and it is reasonable, even if it be not always satisfactory, so far as the attainment of a definite answer is concerned, that we should sometimes try to find out what we, as compared with our forefathers, are doing, whither our labours are tending, and how far we are making an adequate use of our national opportunities.

These questions, when asked concerning our Stage, receive from contemporary observers answers differing so widely as to be absolutely contradictory. On the one hand, we are told that the hard realism of the commerce in which we have as a nation made our wealth

has reacted with fatal accuracy upon our dramatic art. The age, say the pessimists, is an age of prosaic commonplace; cynical criticism has dealt its death-blow to poetic imagination; our dramatists are versifiers more or less eloquent, and more or less neat, but they are not creators; our audiences no longer appreciate the nobler utterances of the drama, whether of to-day, or of days gone by; our actors have naturally caught the spirit of their patrons, and have ceased to be capable of aught that is grand or heroic in its proportions. If these mournful views be not actually expressed in so many words, and if an exception to the general rule of degradation be now and again admitted, their truth is by the school of thinkers to which we allude tacitly admitted or indirectly implied. A writer, for example, like Mr. Edmund W. Gosse, who may be supposed to have weighed his words, does not hesitate to speak of the present "disruption between the stage and the study," and he writes, as of an admitted fact, that "the rupture between poets and the theatrical managers is complete," though "it is useless to revile one party or the other; they have separate aims and distinct views, and their juncture is for the time being impossible." The managerial epigram concerning the spelling of ruin by Shakspere, and of bankruptcy by Byron, is really believed to be something more than a mere half-truth, and it is taken for granted that the theatre no longer holds out attractions for lovers of poetry, of refined art, and of intellectual work. These, however, are not the only objections raised against the stage of our day. We have a survival of the time-dishonoured abuse heaped by the Church upon the drama ever since, as the Rev. H. R. Haweis pointed out the other day, the time when the former, having suddenly dispensed with the aid of the latter, became jealous of its old ally. Our wholesale borrowing from the dramatic productions of a neighbouring country is pointed to as demoralising in itself and in its results. On grounds sufficiently insecure it is argued that the career of the stage-player is necessarily opposed to the conditions of decent and decorous society; the actor is regarded as an outcast, the actress as something worse. We have assuredly no wish to overstate the case, as we believe it to be represented by well-meaning pessimists of this way of thinking; the best possible testimony to the thorough-going nature of their depressing tenets is found in the arguments by means of which well-wishers of the stage seek to convince them that the actor may after all be a thoroughly worthy member of society, that the actress is not debarred by her profession from the womanly attributes of purity and refinement, and that the study of acting as a high art is not of necessity detrimental to the due appreciation of right and wrong, of propriety and impropriety, and of the duty which everyone owes to his God, his neighbours, and himself.

Yet another point of view from which the pessimist looks at the stage may be deemed worthy of allusion, and may be defined as the *soi-disant* "common-sense" or practical treatment of the subject; whilst we may conclude our by no means exhaustive *résumé* with a reference to the eminently unpractical, yet consistent, reasoning of those who object *in limine* to the form of pleasure derivable from the drama, whether it be acted or merely read. Those men who are content, as "practical men," to abuse the stage as it is without taking any heed of the indications which show us the stage as it might be, are in the habit of falling back upon the supposed vices of theatrical management in general. It is all nonsense, say they, to talk of managers as though any one of them had at heart, or really cared one jot for, the interests and advancement of dramatic art. The only interest for which each looks out is a due return at so much per cent. upon his capital; the only advancement for which he seeks is his own. As to public taste, his only aim is to cater for it, whatever it may be, and the lower it is the better for him, inasmuch as it can the more readily and cheaply be gratified. If individual productions and individual performers are in every way worthy of the high reputation claimed for them by enthusiasts, this result is due to chance, and is attained in spite of the ordinary conditions of theatrical enterprise. In justification of these theories, support can unfortunately be obtained only too easily from utterances which seem, from a one-sided consideration of their source, to have special weight, inasmuch as they proceed from those who may be considered experts in the subject of which they treat. Who, we are asked, can be expected to possess greater facilities for the accurate estimation of the average theatrical manager than a widely-popular playwright like Mr. Dion Boucicault, and what is to be expected from the influence of the *entrepreneur* whom he sketched a short time ago in such uncomplimentary terms in the letter to Mr. Charles Reade published in the *North American Review?* Mr. Boucicault, who discusses the decline of the drama as a fact beyond dispute, takes occasion to remark that, "as a low state of health is liable to let in a score of maladies, so a low state of the drama has developed the commercial manager. This person, in most instances, received his education in a bar-room, possibly on the far side of the counter. The more respectable may have been gamblers. Few of them could compose a bill of the play where the spelling and grammar would not disgrace an urchin under ten years of age. These men have obtained possession of first-class theatres, and assume to exercise the artistic and literary functions required to select the actors, to read and determine the merit of dramatic works, and preside generally over the highest and noblest efforts of the

human mind." What, it may fairly be asked, can we hope for the future of a stage presided over by a functionary thus described by one of his coadjutors? What becomes of all the eloquent defences of the drama as a great moral agent when its destinies are swayed by men of a type like this? Lastly, we have honest and earnest men who sincerely believe that the whole scheme of deriving pleasure from the mimic representations of happiness and sorrow, of crime and punishment, of virtue and reward upon the stage, is wrong in principle. Overlooking the fact that the Scriptures themselves supply us with narratives specially in view of our moral teaching, these uncompromising religious utilitarians insist that even the reading of the most innocent novels is doing us the greatest and most lasting injury, by drawing upon our supplies of sympathy and antipathy without calling upon them to result in action. The argument here proves, or attempts to prove, so far too much that it may safely be left to suggest its own answer, and to discuss so wide a question of ethics is in any case beyond our present purpose.

So far we have but enumerated the various standpoints from which, with more or less reason, those who think and speak and write of the present decline of the drama arrive at the same disheartening conclusion. Believing as we do that the conclusion is a radically false one, it would be to us a work of love to answer these different accusations one by one, and reply to chapter and verse of the charge by detailed example borrowed from the region of fact. The necessity for doing this, however, is materially diminished by one weighty consideration too often lost sight of in the discussion of this most interesting and, as we hold, vitally important question. Those who think with us, as well as those who dissent from us, are apt to forget that the question is mainly one of tendency. The point to be decided is, not whether the stage of our day is marred by grave defects, which stunt its usefulness and sometimes cause it to effect harm rather than good, but whether upon the whole the faults by which it is marked show signs of aggravation or of amendment. The wise man, when he studies the barometer to judge of the coming weather, forms his opinion, not by the actual height of the mercury, but by its relative position when compared with that of previous days. The words "stormy," "change," or "fair," which he sees written beside the moving column, convey of themselves little conviction to his mind; he knows that he must dread foul weather when the quicksilver is high if it was higher still yesterday; and he looks forward to a burst of sunshine or a blow of dry, healthy wind, when in the midst of cloud and rain the faithful mercury starts on an upward course, even though it be from its lowest point. Similarly, when we desire to form

some accurate perception of the probable future of our stage we have to study its present by the light of its immediate past. Looking back to the theatrical efforts of the few generations immediately preceding ours, we shall have to say whether the spirit animating our drama is more or less noble than it was, whether our theatrical aims are higher or lower, whether poetry in its better sense is more or less welcome on our stage, and whether our theatrical representations are more or less finished in their art. That our stage and our popular drama are perfect, or indeed that they are free from grave defects, we should be worse than foolish to affirm; but we do not hesitate to admit our deeply-rooted belief in the present revival of the good and reform of the bad in the drama of the day. The indications of the times appear to us to point upward and onward, and they are indications in which we have every faith. So far we are pleased to be on the side of the optimists, nor is our position shaken by our admission that from the pessimists we have much to learn.

The stage, then, in spite of the mistakes and misfortunes which we shall never seek to hide or to extenuate, we believe to be steadily moving onward and upward. Its progress onward is assured by the discovery of managers that it is worth their while to do all that they attempt in the most thorough manner possible. The days of slip-shod production and representation are over at all save theatres of the smallest possible reputation. We have only to look back a single decade to perceive the enormous strides in the direction of stage arrangement, at once suitable, significant, and beautiful, which have of late been made. Managers have awakened to the fact that, if they wish to attract the best and most remunerative audiences, they on their part must approach as near as may be to perfection in such features of their entertainment as are to be secured by liberal and judicious outlay. The system, too, which may be described as that of stars-and-sticks—one or two famous players and the rest of the company nobodies—is rapidly dying out in consequence of the demand of the public for companies which are strong and competent throughout. So far, however, we might be borne onward only in the tide of luxurious civilization, our energy and our polish might readily be expended upon valueless objects. In too many instances this is no doubt the case; managers and players alike waste their labours now as of old, because the material which they select and the standard at which they aim are unworthy. But our contention is that they are moving upward as well as onward, and for proof of this we would point chiefly if not wholly to the estimation in which the purely poetic drama is now-a-days held upon the stage. Just as the impetus given to delicately-finished stage representation at

one theatre has its effect upon half a dozen others, so do the art and scholarly study successfully bestowed by one popular actor upon Shaksperean impersonations tell their tale to audiences other than those directly addressed. We shall hardly be saying too much if we affirm that twenty years ago no ventures in the region of higher drama, such as those made in the production of the Laureate's *Queen Mary*, of *Elfinella*, and of Mr. W. G. Wills's poems, would have been practically possible. Must not long and popular runs, such as have been recently secured for some of Shakspere's masterpieces, react towards the increase of the good taste which made them possible? In this reaction we need not surely hesitate to discover signs that the higher drama is not only dead for our stage, but gives proof of vigorous resuscitation. The good results of this revival, which do not, we may be sure, spring from the action of the "Dramatic Reform Association," but are the outcome of a healthy growth of intellectual life, do not and cannot end here. The nobly-conceived plays, and the artificially-perfected performances, begin to attract to the theatre a class of playgoers which had too long abstained from all attempt to enjoy the drama where it is meant to be enjoyed, in actual representation. Thoughtful men and women find to their delight that what is practically a new field of mental recreation is now opened to them; they discover that they can spend an evening at the play which will realize for them the finest creations of the poet's mind, and will send them home refreshed and invigorated and purified by that which they have heard and seen. Their presence in the theatre will again have its own beneficial influence, inasmuch as it will prove that there is a public, and a large one, ready to appreciate the highest and most ambitious effort which the theatrical manager can make.

Let not the favourable prognostications of the prospects of the stage with which this magazine ventures to commence its career be hastily set down as the *couleur de rose* speculations of enthusiasm. They are based upon a careful comparison of that which is with that which has been; and they express a conviction as to the future which we believe to be justified by a study of the past. At the present moment, we have amongst us more playwrights, actors, and managers devoted to the advancement of art than we have ever had before; we have in each successive season a really considerable number of performances and productions, each indicative, in one particular or another, of an increase in the culture and the artistic sympathy both of those who give and of those who gratefully receive. It would be worse than distrustful to doubt the goal towards which all this is tending, and to join the ranks of those who, from ignorance of the changed aspect of theatrical affairs, from

unconquerable prejudice, or from simple dislike of art of every kind, help to hinder the rise of the drama by perpetually preaching its decline.

A SUBSIDISED THEATRE FOR LONDON.

THE expedience of affording some form of State aid in England for the cultivation and exposition of the dramatic art, is a question which is rapidly becoming ripe for discussion. There was a time, and that not so very long ago, when any proposal having this end in view could only have expected to meet with angry surprise, with laughing scorn, or at least with silent contempt. Even now we may be sanguine in believing that it has safely passed even one of the stages of opposition which, according to John Stuart Mill, every new movement must encounter before it finds acceptance; and the notion of a Government-supported theatre would in England scare many different schools of thinkers and talkers. There have, however, of late been several indications that the time has arrived when the arguments for and against some State recognition of the dramatic art may be soberly and fairly discussed. We do not, we confess, attach very much weight to a motion which was the other day promised in the House of Commons, to the effect "that the establishment of a State theatre of Shaksperian drama would be eminently expedient in the interests of public culture, and would form the only suitable memorial long since due from the English-speaking race to the genius of Shakspere." The source whence this suggestion came, though at the time when we write the motion has, we believe, not been actually made, tends unfortunately to rob it of most of its intrinsic importance, whilst the limitation of the object in view and the specialist nature of the proposed undertaking both help to minimise its chance of accomplishing any valuable result. The honour doubtless due to our great dramatist needs no formal acknowledgment of this kind; and it would be far better marked by a National Theatre based upon wider and more liberal lines. The mere promise, however, of introducing the subject, no matter how baldly and how ineffectively, to the consideration of Parliament, is something, in so far as it shows the direction in which the wind is thought to be veering; and a more important indication of what the public opinion of the future promises to be is afforded by a declaration made by Mr. Gladstone in a letter to this periodical last March. That which a statesman of Mr. Gladstone's calibre thinks to-day a majority of his countrymen is not unlikely to think to-morrow;

and it is worth while to recall his avowal,—"I have always thought that there are strong arguments, among them some which may be drawn from the existence of institutions like the Royal Academy, to show that the drama requires, in order to its prosperity, some great centre of attraction and of elevation." It is surely not unfair to deduce that Mr. Gladstone, who is known to take an interest in the worthier doings of the stage, would be not unwilling to see the country provide for the drama the centre of attraction and of elevation which he believes it to require.

Apart, too, from these more definite signs, we have the fact that the drama has of late been favourably regarded as an agent of possible moral good by those who have hitherto set their faces most strongly against it. Utterances like those made from the pulpit by many men of mark and of influence in the Church prove that one at least of the obstacles in the way of the State theatre is well nigh removed; and though, for our own part, we may not be prepared to value the drama wholly or chiefly for its direct influence as a teacher of morality, we may yet hail with delight the friendly attitude of those who feel bound to take a sort of utilitarian view of art. At the present moment, the stage holds, as we have striven to show elsewhere, a higher place in the estimation of the public than it has ever held before, and it seems to be fairly on the high-road towards that elevation which Mr. Gladstone justly considers it to lack. Thus we have, what until lately we have not had, a tolerably general anxiety on the part of intellectual and influential people for the advancement and refinement and perfected culture of the dramatic art, whilst, as might naturally be expected, we have various means suggested for the attainment of an object which many desire. The ground of those who demand that the nation should step in to supply a national want has, at any rate, the advantage of being readily defined. For good or for evil, the State already interferes to do for us innumerable things that could, after a fashion, be done for us by private enterprise. The State, moreover, looks after our bodily welfare by means of sanitary and anti-adulteration legislation; nay, it even concerns itself in our education, which it makes compulsory, and provides for, to a great extent, out of the national pocket. It has yet to be proved either that the Drama is unworthy of a subsidy in England, or that it would not benefit by any subsidy that it might obtain. The rank which acting holds amongst the arts we need not here determine; we may content ourselves with falling back upon our belief that the exposition of one of the noblest forms of creative poetry has an inalienable right to be regarded as exceedingly fine art. With those who deny this proposition it could be of no pos-

sible use to argue; tastes which differ are hard to reconcile, and where taste does not exist it can scarcely be implanted by argument. Granted, then, that acting is or might be a fine art, and that arts are worthy of national assistance and encouragement, and the question to be determined is, whether the State can or cannot usefully provide it with assistance. The right of the State to interfere in the matter is, of course, recognised in various ways; but, unhappily, this interference has hitherto taken the form of prohibitory legislation only; as, for instance, in the powers of negative control given to the Lord Chamberlain. Is there any valid reason why it should not help that which is good as well as check that which is evil?

Amongst many reasons which have been and are urged against the attainment of beneficial results from such a step as is contemplated in the establishment of a subsidised theatre in London, the most formidable is, perhaps, that of the political economists, who produce from their armoury the weapon known as the theory of supply and demand, together with the stock axioms concerning the inexpedience of an endeavour on the part of a Government to do the work of private enterprise. To those who reason thus we would merely say, "Look at the results of the system as it is." Does private enterprise find itself equal to the task of presenting the noblest English dramas by thorougly adequate companies all the year round? Can a manager, who necessarily has a keen eye for profit, be expected to avoid the long-run system, the "star" system, and the system of discouraging all young playwrights and young players until their names are made? Can private enterprise found a school of acting, except in the limited sense in which a theatre, by cramping all its company to one style of piece, gives to its performances a characteristic manner of its own? The mere pecuniary difficulty in the way of securing such a company and such a répertoire as those of the Théâtre Français places the undertaking wholly beyond the reach of individual effort; nor, indeed, could it be overcome by any aid which was unable to compensate for comparative smallness of salary by offering prestige, permanent employment, leisure for study and pleasure, and the prospect of a pension in years to come. Now these advantages, which are at the very root of the success of the Parisian theatre, cannot, as it seems to us, be secured except by means of a subsidy paid in some way or other by the nation, for that which we hold to be an incalculable national gain. If it be an advantage to possess, at least, one theatre which may be conducted without any necessity to look for hand-to-mouth profit, which may, to some extent, practise art for art's sake, and which may guide rather than follow

public taste, then is that advantage one for which we should be prepared to pay. The payment could not, in the long run, be anything but infinitesimal in its strain upon a wealthy people like ourselves; in actual money, indeed, it need be but comparatively small, if it took, as we could wish, the form of the establishment of an institution whose honour and security would be such as to make membership of it the goal of every actor's and actress's most honourable ambition.

It would be interesting, had we time and opportunity, to inquire how far the world-wide fame of the Théâtre Français has injuriously affected other theatres, and how far the general state of dramatic art in Paris justifies the assumptions of the economists who hold that Government interference stints private enterprise. We are, of course, mindful of the fact that the Théâtre Français is not the only house in Paris which has received a subsidy; but, leaving this out of the question, we are confident that the condition of French acting, as a whole, could be proved to have benefited indirectly from the Government aid in question, even more than the favoured theatres have gained directly. Similarly, too, would English acting be improved by the establishment of a definite school, where it could be taught as an art, and of a theatre where it could be cultivated as something more than a mere managerial speculation. At the present moment, while the old stock companies of the provinces are finally broken up by the incursions of travelling troupes, there is literally no school where the would-be player can learn the whole business of his profession. He never was taught it very methodically; now he must pick it up how he can. The natural tendency, too, of London managers to cater for a vast number of patrons, with a programme changed as seldom as may be, will necessarily diminish the artist's opportunity of doing justice to himself and his art. It is of no use to blame the manager; what he does he does exceedingly well, and it is reasonable enough that he should wish to save himself expense by repeating it for as many hundred nights as it will fill the house with a paying audience. To quote an illustration given in *The Theatre* some time since, "a London manager would be aghast if required to present such a weekly programme as the following: — Monday, *Richard III.;* Tuesday, *The School for Scandal;* Wednesday, *Charles I.;* Thursday, *The Merchant of Venice;* Friday, *Ours;* Saturday, *Pygmalion and Galatea.* Yet such variety of dramatic entertainment as this is constantly provided at the Théâtre Français, and that not as a *tour de force,* or as an exception, but as a matter of course. What a boon to country people visiting town, as well as to Londoners themselves, it would be to possess a theatre where a

weekly bill such as this was the rule, we need scarcely suggest; and, indeed, we may confidently predict that if we had now any National theatre where a subsidy helped to make such a result possible, the loudest outcry of regret would be heard were any parsimonious Chancellor of the Exchequer to propose withdrawing the annual grant.

The one point of view from which the establishment of an English theatre on the basis of the Théâtre Français has to our minds any serious difficulty has little to do either with a principle which we see admitted elsewhere, or with an expediency which we hold to be beyond dispute. There must doubtless be grave obstacles in the way of our legislators when they attempt to follow in the bold footsteps of Louis XIV. and Napoleon I., even though it be only in the direction of patronage of art. Arrangements which could readily be made by an edict of Moscow in 1812 might well prove hard to imitate—at all events at a parallel cost—by an Act of Parliament in 1878. The new organisation would need a moving spirit of strength, as well as of goodwill; and it is probable that new elements might in this country, and in this age, have to be imported into the scheme. But great though these difficulties of detail may be, we may rest assured that they will be conquered so soon as public opinion is ripe to receive the conquest. The Minister of Fine Arts who combines discretion with taste, and administrative power with both, will be found so soon as his work is earnestly desired by the people, and national aid will be forthcoming when the national want is felt. In the mean time, all that we can do is to recognise and appreciate every little advance made by individual effort to approach the achievement of our ideal theatre, and to keep steadily in view the artistic ends which we hope one day to see accomplished by a subsidised national theatre.

THE OPERA SEASON, 1878.

ITALIAN Opera is an exotic which has taken root and flourished in English soil, and in no other city in the world has it found so remarkable a recognition as that which London affords in the maintenance of two Italian Opera-houses, unaided by State grants, and supported entirely by the patronage of the general public. The most Chauvinistic of patriots must admit that the existence of Italian opera, as a permanent institution amongst us, has had a beneficial influence on the cultivation of musical taste, and the annals of each Italian opera season afford statistics which may be usefully studied

by those who take interest in the progress of musical culture in this country. Our two Italian opera-houses have just closed, and the present moment is appropriate for a retrospect of the season, and an estimate of the advantages resulting from the operations of Mr. Gye at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent-Garden, and of Mr. Mapleson at Her Majesty's Opera in the Haymarket.

The Royal Italian Opera season commenced April 2nd, with a performance of Verdi's opera *Un Ballo in Maschera,* and closed July 20th with a performance of the same composer's latest opera, *Aïda.* During the season eighty performances were given, and there were twenty-nine operas produced, including two novelties, M. Victor Massé's *Paul et Virginie* and Herr von Flotow's *Alma.* Thus the promise contained in the prospectus of the season, that at least two new works should be produced, was faithfully fulfilled. Her Majesty's Opera season commenced April 20th with a performance of *La Sonnambula,* and terminated July 13th with a performance of the late M. Georges Bizet's *Carmen.* During the season sixty-one performances were given, and nineteen operas were produced, including *Carmen,* which was a novelty.

The most popular opera has been Gounod's *Faust,* which was performed twelve times; the average being under four times. Bizet's *Carmen* follows next. Bellini, Verdi, and Meyerbeer exceed the average, and all the rest are below it. Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Rossini, and Auber were partially neglected, and Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* were each performed thrice. These figures do not afford much encouragement to those who desire to see the higher kinds of music become increasingly popular, and the two new operas by MM. Massé and Flotow afforded little consolation, being weak and ineffective works which are not likely to keep the stage. On the other hand, M. Bizet's *Carmen* proved to be a masterly and delightful work, full of original fancy, and elaborated with conscientious care and rare ability. The season cannot be pronounced barren which bears such desirable fruit as *Carmen.* In Mr. Mapleson's prospectus it was announced that Gounod's charming pastoral opera *Mirella,* and Verdi's *Forza del Destino* would be produced. The non-production of the former opera is a matter of regret; the omission of Verdi's gloomy opera has probably saved many persons from nightmare.

Several new artists have appeared during the season. Amongst the most successful may be mentioned Mdlle. Cepeda, a Spanish vocalist, who appears likely to become a valuable accession to the Royal Italian Opera, which has long needed an able "dramatic" prima donna, and at Her Majesty's Opera Madame Pappenheim, also a "dramatic" prima donna, who has gained public favour. At

the same house the Viennese contralto Fräulein Tremel, as "Mdlle. Tremelli," has made a genuine success, and bids fair to become the greatest contralto of modern times, when her splendid voice shall have been duly cultivated. An English contralto, Miss Cummings, also made a favourable impression. Mdlle. Minnie Hauk made a successful rentrée, after an absence of nine years, and her brilliant impersonation of "Carmen" has been a prominent attraction. M. Thierry has been seldom heard, but he seems likely to prove a highly acceptable buffo cantante. Of other new-comers it will be best to postpone saying anything for the present. They will probably improve by next season.

On the whole, the results of the recent opera season have not been gratifying. There seems to de a growing desire on the part of managers to rely on spectacular effect rather than on excellence of vocal and instrumental *ensemble*. Lavish expenditure in one direction entails parsimony in another, and the splendid *coups d'œil* at Covent Garden are sometimes associated with discordant tones from a stage band which would not be endured on the deck of a river steamer. The cost of providing costumes, scenery, &c., for a modern opera is preposterously high. Managers naturally wish to recoup themselves for their outlay, and are glad to avail themselves of "promising" artists, who can be secured for a term of years on small salaries. Some of the novices turn out well, but most of them make their débuts in important parts before they have learned how to sing, and thoroughly trained vocalists are becoming so rare that we may expect a speedy extinction of the pure Italian school of vocalisation. There are but few vocalists now on the Italian stage who can be recommended as models to students. The haste with which operas are brought out in quick succession, often without rehearsal of any kind, is prejudicial, and the choristers are worn out by singing five and six times a week in public, besides working at rehearsals. Competition is said to be beneficial to the public: but this is not always the case when the interests of art are left to competing managers, who act as if they were rival shopkeepers. The last season has been in a pecuniary sense disastrous, and there seems good reason to think that London can hardly maintain two Italian opera-houses, and that with one such establishment, properly controlled by a committee of subscribers, better artistic results might be obtained. Managerial rivalry has been the main cause of the "star system." There seems to be no valid reason why a "star" who can attract £1,000 should not receive £200; but managers who pay leading artists on such terms are compelled to starve the casts of operas, and the interests of art suffer. The most satisfactory feature in the past season has been the excellence

of the regular bands at both opera-houses, and the ability and carefulness displayed by Sir Michael Costa, Signor Vianesi, and Signor Bevignani, in the discharge of their onerous duties as conductors. Italian opera in this country may be said to be on its trial, and unless conducted on more legitimate principles than have been latterly maintained, its permanence as a popular institution may be endangered.

AN OLD STAGER.

MY LAST NIGHTMARE.

NO matter where—no matter when;—that matters not a bit.
They played a comedy, methought; and I was in the pit.
I won the front, the middle seat, by struggling for it hard,
When lo! a stranger darted in, contiguous to the bard.
I found my neighbour affable: he made a few remarks
On commerce and on politics, the weather and the parks.
'Twas only when an act was o'er he threw the mask aside,
Produced his hobby *tout-à-coup*, and swiftly got astride.

"You don't remember Harley, sir? Of course; but never mind.
A quaint performer Harley was; unequalled of his kind.
Grotesque in ev'ry feature, sir; grotesque in ev'ry limb.
Law bless me, what a *Dogberry* the drama lost in *him!*
I'm not the man to go about and swear the present age
Has nobody presentable to put upon the stage.
No, not at all; quite otherwise—but still we must allow,
In spite of all our funny men, we've not a Harley *now.*

"And Farren—there's another name, no easy one to match.
What *style,* sir! That's the sort of thing your youngsters never catch.
The grace, the charm, the elegance—the *everything,* I mean!
We lost Sir Peter Teazle, sir, when Farren left the scene.
Perhaps—to go from high to low—you may remember Wright?—
'Not old enough?'—Exactly so. I only said you *might.*—
Not always over-delicate, but so intensely droll,
He nearly suffocated one—he did, upon my soul!

"By Jove, sir, they were jolly times, the old Adelphi days:
Paul Bedford, Wright, Miss Woolgar, shone in one colossal blaze;
Leigh Murray, and a Mr. Smith—a Smith initialled O—
The chartered representative of residents below.
They had the Keeley couple, too; both always to the fore.
Sure such a pair was never seen—and will be never more.
Ah, what a woman, Mrs. K.!—You've parents, I suppose,
Who saw her play *Jack Sheppard,* sir, when Paul sang 'Jolly Nose'?

"I never saw Macready, sir; but I remember Brooke.
I've seen the model British tar portrayed by 'Tippy' Cooke.
I recollect the fairy times, the bright Lyceum days,
When Planché brought us back again the genii and the fays.
I recollect—but surely, sir, you scarcely can expect
A chronological account of all I recollect.
Besides, you're growing sleepy, sir; I noticed it before.
I've wasted more than time enough; I shan't waste any more!"

HENRY S. LEIGH.

THE THEATRE No1 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Yours Truly
Ellen Terry.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

Portraits.

I.—MISS ELLEN TERRY.

IN the autumn of 1858 an audience comprising the *cognoscenti* of the intellectual world assembled at the Princess's Theatre. It was the first night of the second revival there of *King John*, and the announcement of a new enterprise on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean invariably awakened much interest. Expectation ran high, but it was not disappointed. The picture set before us of Norman England was vivid and correct; the acting of Mr. and Mrs. Kean in the principal characters was of the highest stamp. But when the audience dispersed, their thoughts were not entirely absorbed by what we have mentioned. No scene in the play had produced a deeper impression than that between Hubert and Arthur, thanks in the first place to the dramatist himself, and in the next to the unaffected pathos displayed by the little girl who represented the Prince. That little girl was Miss Ellen Terry, who had previously appeared at the same theatre as Mamillius in *Winter's Tale*, and other juvenile parts. Her merits were amply appreciated, and *The Times'* critic, in common with his brethren, praised the performance with characteristic liberality. It did not require exceptional sagacity to perceive that a bright future was in store for the young actress.

From that time until the present Miss Terry's progress has been rapid and decisive, although she has not been continuously before the public. Mr. Kean left the Princess's in 1859, and Miss Terry subsequently appeared at the Haymarket, the Queen's, the Olympic, the Adelphi, and the Holborn Theatres. In 1867 she left the stage, as she thought, for good, but seven years afterwards was prevailed upon to return. The character in which she reappeared was Philippa Chester, in the *Wandering Heir*. That her mind had not been idle during her retirement was proved when, in 1874, she appeared at the Prince of Wales' Theatre. Her acting in the *Merchant of Venice* and *Money* amounted to a revelation, and those who had predicted her success on the stage were in high glee. In a part of a different description, Mabel Vane, in *Masks and Faces*, she confirmed the advantage she had gained. Since her engagement at the Court Theatre her popularity has perceptibly increased. Her Lilian Vavasour might by itself have secured the success of the revival of *New Men and Old Acres;* her Olivia has given her a place in the first rank of English actresses.

Had not the word become, through terrible misuse, opprobrious, we should venture to describe Miss Ellen Terry as an *old-fashioned* actress; for in all but age, countenance, and attire, she seems to be of the past period, when grace of bearing and nice perception of what may be called the inflections of a rôle were thought worth study. She is a finely-formed link joining two styles of acting, the artistic and untrained. Becoming unwillingly accustomed to expect on the stage no more than imitation of the careless ease which is affected and incurable clumsiness which is attained in the manners of modern society, it was with rare pleasure that we found memories of the elegant and skilful actresses of a bygone generation awakened when she first reappeared as the irresistible advocate in the *Merchant of Venice* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre.

For scarcely had the curtain been long raised than the spectator could perceive that the representative of the Venetian heiress, who with anxious heart and captivating attitude watched Fate, as princely lovers challenged it for her sake, was not of the common order. The regular features, of no rare beauty, became singularly fascinating as change of expression indicated the varying emotions of suspense, fear, relief, delight. The form, of no unique perfection, seemed from classic gracefulness of pose to be that of a very Roman lady such as sculptors would perpetuate; and the contralto voice, though at times unmusical, sounded in its depth and soothing cadences grateful to ears long familiar only with the monotonous piping from the shrill soprani of self-promoted soubrettes. One saw instantly that the exquisitely blended character of Portia had been understood and studied, and that it was rendered not merely by the "light of nature," which is often only the rushlight of ignorance, but by means of the faculty which training alone can impart. The sympathetic, impressive voice, delivering the verse of Shakspere, so seldom heard in harmony, moved feelings which even a more melodious one would have failed to arouse, and thrilled our common sense of the beautiful. Then the exquisite Mercy speech was spoken as it had not been for years. Not, however, in the serious Trial, but in the delightful Raillery scene which follows it, did the true line and range of the actress become evident. Then, as we watched the slender swaying figure, passing with long, graceful, gliding steps to and fro, the freely extending, bended arms and lightly waving hands, and well-manipulated fan pointing each airy utterance, we recognised a refined and accomplished comédienne preserving the invaluable traditions of her noble art, and showing what a height it might attain.

The Round Table.

REMINISCENCES.

By E. A. Sothern.

THE piece known as *The American Cousin*, by Tom Taylor, was put in rehearsal. I was cast for the part of Lord Dundreary, a fourth-rate old man, only forty-seven lines. I refused the part, but finally agreed with Mr. Burnett, the stage manager, to play, on the condition that I should *entirely rewrite it*. Miss Keene was also full of objections, which, however, she finally yielded. In rewriting the part, I threw into it everything that struck me as wildly absurd. There is not a single look, word, or act in Lord Dundreary that has not been suggested to me by persons whom I have known since I was five years of age. It has been frequently said that I have cut the piece down for the purpose of Dundrearyising the performance. This is not true. I have simply cut out the cellar scene, a drunken act, which was never popular, and so rearranged the play, that instead of seventeen scenes, which it had when it came from the hands of the author, it is now in four acts of one scene each.

My part the first night was by no means a pronounced success. In fact, it was two or three weeks before the people began to understand what I was about. I had acted so many serious parts before, that the public evidently considered that every tone of my voice ought to be pathetic, just as they now seem to think that every tone represents some mad eccentricity.

"How," I have been asked, "did you happen to hit on that strange hop, skip, and jump business, which has been made so effective in your delineation of the character?"

"Why," I reply, "it was the simplest thing in the world; it was a mere accident. I have naturally an elastic disposition, and during a rehearsal one cold morning I was hopping at the back of the stage, when Miss Keene sarcastically inquired if I was going to introduce that in Dundreary. The actors and actresses standing around laughed, and taking the cue, I replied: 'Yes, Miss Keene; that's my view of the character.' Having said this I was bound to stick to it, and as I progressed with the rehearsal I found that the whole company, including scene-shifters and property-men, were roaring with

laughter at my infernal nonsense. When I saw that the public accepted the satire, I toned it down to the broad caricature which may be seen at the present day by any one who has a quick sense of the absurd."

You remember that in one act I have a by-play on my fingers, on which I count from one to ten, and then reversing, begin with the right thumb and count ten, nine, eight, seven, six and five are eleven. This has frequently been denounced by critics as utterly out of place in the character. But I took the incident from actual life, having seen a notoriously clever man on the English turf, as quick as lightning in calculating odds, completely puzzled by this ridiculous problem. My distortion of the old aphorisms has likewise been frequently cavilled at as too nonsensical for an educated man. Now see how easily this thought was suggested. A number of us some years ago were taking supper in Halifax after a performance, when a gentleman who has now retired from the stage, but who is living in New York, suddenly entered the room and said: "Oh, yes, I see; birds of a feather," &c. The thought instantly struck me on the weak side, and, winking at my brother actors, and assuming utter ignorance, I said: "What do you mean by birds of a feather?" He looked rather staggered and replied: "What, have you never heard of the old English proverb, 'Birds of a feather flock together'?" Every one shook his head. He then said: "I never met such a lot of ignoramuses in my life." That was my cue, and I began to turn the proverb inside out. I said to him: "There never could have been such a proverb—birds of *a* feather! the idea of a whole flock of birds having only one feather! The thing is utterly ridiculous. Besides, the poor bird that had that feather must have flown on one side; consequently, as the other birds couldn't fly at all, they couldn't flock together. But even accepting the absurdity, if they flocked at all they must flock together, as no bird could possibly be such a fool as to go into a corner and try and flock by himself." Our visitor began to see the point of the logic, and was greeted with roars of laughter. I made a memorandum of the incident, and years afterwards elaborated the idea in writing Dundreary. I have quires upon quires of memoranda of a similar character; but whenever I play the part, the public seem so disappointed at not hearing the old lines, that I fear I shall never have the opportunity of getting them to accept what would really be a much better version.

Let me tell you about a certain supper in Glasgow. It was one of those late affairs which sometimes occur after theatre hours, and I had around me a number of excellent friends and *bons vivants*,

among whom was a professor of the Glasgow College, several barristers, and two or three army men. This professor was a singularly clever and jolly fellow; but he had a peculiar way of leaving a company, very frequently without saying good-bye to any person present. It was a pure matter of politeness on his part, however, because, having duties to perform either on his own account or that of others, he didn't choose to make a feature of his departure, and so disturb the remainder of the guests. One of the officers was Major ——— —I won't mention his name—a splendid specimen of a bluff, honest-spoken old English gentleman. In the course of the conversation at the table, he remarked: "I went to see the world-famed conjuror, Professor ——— to-night; and what a pity it is that he should go on the stage in such a shameful condition!" I asked him what was the matter. "Why," said he, "he was drunk, sir, disgracefully drunk!" The demon of mischief instantly took possession of me. The major was not acquainted with our eccentric guest, the professor from the Glasgow College. Therefore, in the most accidental manner, crossing my knees, I managed to touch the major on the leg, and at the same time softly "Sh-sh-sh!" He turned around quickly, looked at me, and became very red in the face, evidently taking a hint the reason of which he didn't comprehend. I saw at once that he was in a mental muddle, and winking in a suggestive manner, as much as to say, "Look out for yourself," remarked *sotto voce*: "My dear sir, you've made a mistake. You surely don't mean he was drunk?" "No, no," he replied in a disconcerted sort of way, "not exactly drunk, but—but—rather confused, you understand. I've seen a good many of the English jugglers, and I don't consider him as good as several whom I know."

At this juncture the professor took his hat and walked out, which we, who knew him, recognised as his quiet way of absenting himself without going through the formula of breaking up a social party. You see, he had his lecture to prepare for the next day, and we of the club, being aware of the fact, paid no attention to his exit. When the professor was fairly out of hearing, I observed to the major: "This is a nice mess you've made!"

"What is it? what did I say?" he inquired anxiously.

"Why," said I, "didn't you see the indignant way in which he got up and left the room? That's the son-in-law of the conjuror—married his daughter only two days ago, and of course he feels naturally indignant at the remark which he heard you make."

"Hang it," said the major, "why didn't you tell me? You kicked me and confused me."

"Nonsense," I replied; "I looked at you and winked at you, and

shoo-ed at you, and tried to stop you as an intelligent being capable of taking a hint."

"Oh, well, well, well; who the deuce could follow a wink like that? But what am I going to do about it?"

I suggested that he should write the professor a nice letter, and explain the affair in a semi-apologetic way, stating that he was a trifle under the influence of wine, &c. Thereupon the major went to my desk, and at my dictation scribbled off a note and properly addressed it.

"Now," I said, "I will send this by my own servant, so that there shall be no miscarriage." Of course I didn't send it at all; but the next day I wrote a letter and had it copied and signed in the professor's name, which was one of the most grossly insulting in its character that I could conceive. It read something like this:—

"Simply because you happen to be a cavalry officer and I a quiet university professor, you think you can insult me by assailing the purity of my father-in-law. As you yourself confess, you are only a drunken cad," &c. &c.

The major came the next morning trembling with rage, and showed me the letter.

"What do you think of that?" said he, excitedly. "He calls me a drunken cad."

I soothingly replied: "Oh, that's only his classical method of expression."

"D——n his classical method. I'll go and kick him out of his lecture-room."

I calmed the major as well as I knew how, and as soon as he was gone, sat down and wrote a note to the other professor—the conjuror—in the name of Major So-and-So, to the effect that he had received a letter from his son-in-law, saying that he would cowhide him at the first opportunity. That brought another communication still more mixing up matters. Of course you understand that I wrote all these myself, and consequently held the trump cards in my own hand.

These letters went backwards and forwards for several days. Finally, I sent one from the professor challenging the major, and at the same time caused a number of telegraphic messages to be transmitted from different parts of Scotland from men with whom I knew he was intimate, expressive of their astonishment that a gentleman so well known for his high courage should have been guilty of conduct so utterly unbecoming his position. Now the major was a man of warm temperament, who in bygone days, in India and elsewhere, had been fighting duels about once a week, although such a piece of absurdity, at the present hour, would have resulted in his being

cashiered. As a consequence he was thrown into a state of extreme excitement and perplexity. Just about this time I started for London, leaving behind me a batch of letters and telegrams to be sent to the major on the following day. They were of the most slighting and insulting description. Rendered utterly desperate by these, he followed me to London, sending me a telegram in advance, saying that he desired to act on my advice in the premises, and would meet me at a given hour for consultation. I then arranged it to have the professor from Glasgow to dine with me the very day the major was to call. As the latter walked into the room he was completely staggered when the professor advanced and shook him by the hand in the most cordial and amicable manner. Of course the major couldn't resist what he now regarded as an evidence of good will, and commenced to make explanations. The professor listened in speechless astonishment. Not having the ghost of an idea what it was all about, he thought the major was drunk; and as I kept making signs to him, he treated him accordingly. The whole thing was so ludicrous that at last we all of us burst into a hearty, good-natured laugh, which was redoubled when I told the whole story.

I ought to say that I never would have indulged in this little joke had it not been that the major, some weeks previously, had got me into comparative trouble by a practical joke of his own, of which I was the victim. My revenge was natural and most complete.

I THINK that one of the most reckless affairs with which I have ever had to do occurred at the house of a friend of mine who was himself fond of a joke, and had at home abundant opportunity for the making of one. A regiment had just arrived from the Crimean war, and was forwarded to Glasgow to be quartered there. My friend asked the officers to dine immediately after their arrival, although he was a stranger to them all except by reputation. He invited me to go with him, remarking: "Now, Ned, let us have some fun"; and we at once concocted a plan. I knew his residence very well, and could do anything I pleased in it. With his leave I sent for a stonemason and told him to ascertain where the flue from the firegrate made its exit on the roof, as I wanted him that night, during the dinner, to call down the chimney in answer to any question I might ask. My friend, the host, meanwhile, was to introduce me to his guests as a celebrated American ventriloquist who was about to appear in London, and was acknowledged to be the most extraordinary artist of the kind in the world. While the meal was going on, Colonel ——, a very aristocratic old man, gradually began to throw out suggestions and to lead conversation in the direction of ventriloquial subjects. I, of course, pretended to be very bashful, and to avoid any

allusion to the theme. After much solicitation, however, I consented to speak, as he said, only two or three words. Mark you, I had timed the experiment so that it should be exactly eight o'clock, or within a few minutes of it, when I knew that my mason would be keeping his engagement at the other end of the chimney. Going to the fireplace, I shouted at the top of my voice—for it was a deuced long way up—"Are you there?" but there was no response. I came to the conclusion that as by this time it was raining very hard, the stonemason had got sick of the whole business, and left the roof. Imagine my surprise when, in eight or ten seconds afterwards, just as I had turned and was going to tell the colonel that my failure was due entirely to an ulcerated sore throat, a deep voice was heard hallooing down the flue: "I don't hear a word!" The colonel, officers, and all the guests looked perfectly staggered. I immediately took advantage of the situation, and remarked: "There, you see how badly I did! You noticed what a guttural tone there was in my voice;" but they all crowded round me, and said it was the most extraordinary thing they ever heard in their lives, and begged me to repeat the experiment. I had previously made the arrangement with the mason that when I said "Good-bye!" three times he would understand that I required him no more. I therefore shouted out "Good-bye!" three times, and, getting no response, concluded that he had gone, and thought no more about the matter. About an hour after this the colonel was leaning against the mantelpiece, smoking a cigar, when he turned to me—I was on the opposite side of the room—and said: "Colonel Slayter" (by which name I had been introduced to the company), "I have no hesitation in saying that you are the most extraordinary ventriloquist alive. Now, in my own little way I occasionally try to amuse my children in the same manner; but it is really absurd, after the wonderful effect you have produced, to give you an illustration here; still, I will try. For instance, when at home I sometimes put my head up the chimney and shout: 'Are you coming down?'" and the old gentleman accompanied the action to the words. Judge of our utter amazement when a yell was heard in the chimney: "Oh, go to the devil! I have had enough of this." It so happened that I was chatting with a number of the officers at the moment, and the colonel almost reeled up against the table in his astonishment at such an unexpected reply. Everybody looked at him as if for an explanation. Taking in the situation quickly, and carelessly stepping forward, I said: "There, gentlemen, that is my last effort. I am suffering so much from bronchial affection that you must really excuse me from any further exhibition." One and all of them gathered around me and again wrung my hands, expressing their amazement

at the high art I had evinced, and promising me a magnificent reception whenever I should appear in public. It was as much as I could do to preserve a serious face. The joke was too good to keep long, and in a little while afterwards, in the course of conversation, the host said:

"By the way, Sothern, do you remember So-and-so?"

"What!" said all the officers, looking up; "Sothern? I thought this was Colonel Slayter?"

"Oh, no," replied my friend, "that's Lord Dundreary."

That was my first and last experience as a ventriloquist.

THE DRAMA OF THE DAY IN ITS RELATION TO LITERATURE.

By Frank Marshall.

WE often hear expressions of regret that the Drama has ceased to hold that position in the contemporary literature of our day which it occupied in that of our forefathers. In fact, we may say that, in spite of some exceptional efforts, few and far between, and attended, as a rule, with more or less failure, the acted drama of our day has ceased to pretend to any literary merit. Of course there are still published, from time to time, works divided into acts and scenes, calling themselves dramas; but these are rarely written with any view to representation, even in a condensed form; and for the most part they do not enrich the author or the publisher. Truth to tell, the dramatic faculty does not seem to exist among our poets to any great extent. Talfourd and Milman are dead, both of whom wrote dramas which could be acted with effect, as well as read with pleasure; Bulwer Lytton was a singular instance of a literary dramatist who attained great popularity, but we cannot class the best of his plays with such works as *Ion* or *Fazio*, nor with *Philip Van Artevelde*, or even *The Blot on the Scutcheon*. Sir Henry Taylor and Mr. Browning are both among us, but the Drama has never seemed to them, for some time past, worthy of their best work. Mr. Tennyson's *Queen Mary* did not, either from a poetic or from a dramatic point of view, add much to his literary reputation; while Mr. Swinburne, who might have risen by help of stern self-discipline to the higest position among modern dramatists, has frittered away his magnificent genius in monstrous contortions of revolt against the temperance and decency of art. We suppose Mr. Swinburne would, like Byron, scout the bare idea of putting one of his tragedies on the

stage; and though there was some talk once of the late John Oxenford having prepared an acting version of *Bothwell*, we doubt if even one who, like him, combined the elegant culture of a great scholar with the strong common sense of a practical dramatist, could have succeeded in such a task. One of Mr. Ross Neil's dramas has been seen on the stage with, as far as London is concerned, but little success. We wish it had been otherwise; but the difficulties which beset the path of a dramatist nowadays who would give us original plays of real literary merit are almost insuperable, and it is small wonder if very few writers are found even to attempt to overcome them.

These difficulties arise from various causes and in various quarters. In the first place, the fact that plays now cannot be printed or published simultaneously with their production, except at the risk of losing the right of representation, prevents the dramatist from appealing to the sober judgments of the more intellectual members of his audience, as well as to the reading public. In times past a considerable portion of the author's profit arose from the sale of his play when printed. The last new tragedy or comedy was as much sought after as now is the last new novel; the price was generally so moderate as to be within the means of comparatively poor readers; and though it may appear, on a superficial estimate, that very few copies of the plays so printed have been preserved to posterity, yet when we consider them as part of the current and ephemeral literature of the day, we shall find that, taking into consideration the number of the population, a greater proportion of separate copies of plays have been preserved to us than we shall probably leave to posterity of the works which in our day supply their place. From Southerne, who, much to Dryden's chagrin, got £700 for a play which not one reader in a thousand has ever heard of, to Goldsmith, who received £400 for *The Goodnatured Man* on its first production, the dramatist's profits were greater and more certain during the last two centuries than they are now. Not even Mr. Gilbert or Mr. Byron would set down at £400 or £500 the value of the mere right of printing one of their pieces. Yet more than that sum, allowing for the difference in the value of money now and then, would be obtained by an author for the book of his play in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The system of giving the author every third night the whole of the net receipts brought to the dramatist, if only moderately successful, a large and speedy profit. Suppose a play to run ten nights, the author would receive all the money paid for admission on the third, sixth, and ninth nights, less the working expenses. I happen to have seen an account of Garrick's receipts during the first two seasons at Drury Lane, and I remember that the

receipts on the third night of a play were rarely lower than £160; the sum deducted for expenses was £60, leaving the author a clear £100 profit. Thus, exclusive of the money received for the copyright of the book, by a successful play an author would make £300 in less than a fortnight, and that without any trouble of collecting fees or expenses for commission. When we consider the relative value of money now and in the last century, we must confess that, as far as English dramatic authors are concerned, the mere pecuniary inducement to write for the stage is not so strong now as it was then.

As regards the literary distinction and the general fame to be won by a successful dramatist, it is very little nowadays, as far as England is concerned. The most original, and, perhaps, on the whole, the most successful dramatist of our time, T. W. Robertson, is hardly recognised as having any position in literature at all. Take our most successful living authors, Messrs. Wills, Gilbert, Byron, Albery, not to mention others, do they hold anything like the position they ought in the literary world? Do not writers of dry historical treatises, of barren and lifeless disquisitions on philosophy, of spasmodic and incomprehensible verses, of slipshod, incoherent, novels, to say nothing of the really great masters in other branches of literature, affect to look down upon these and other dramatists of their day, and is not this affectation encouraged to a great extent by what calls itself the cultivated portion of society? Mr. Tom Taylor, who has written some of the best plays of our day, though it is the fashion to sneer at him, owes his position to other than his dramatic writings. Mr. Burnand, again, is recognised as one of the first humourists of our time; though had he written nothing but plays, however successful, the literary world would pretend it had never heard of him. Take the writers mentioned above. Mr. Wills has certainly, in three cases, been very successful in obtaining public recognition of his work when he has aimed at a high standard; I mean in *Charles I.*, *Jane Shore*, and *Olivia*. But how many other plays has he given us which are full of the highest dramatic merit, and yet are comparatively unknown? The work expended on *The Man o' Airlie* and on *Hinko* could not be less than that expended on *Olivia*. Certainly the two first-named plays are superior to the last in literary merit; yet who has ever read them? Mr. Gilbert has printed a volume containing tho only high-class plays which he has written; but we doubt very much whether the farce appended to them—*Trial by Jury*—is not much better known to, and much more highly rated by, cultivated society than the *Wicked World* or *Pygmalion and Galatea*. However, as far as success goes, Mr. Gilbert has nothing to complain of. In my opinion his best work lacks the highest quality of genius—sym-

pathetic power; but I do not hesitate to say that it is his worst and most superficial work which gains for him the literary position he holds, and that ten times higher dramatic work than *Pygmalion and Galatea* would not win for him one tithe of the esteem and fame which such comparatively childish nonsense as *H.M.S. Pinafore* secures to him in the opinion of society. In my opinion, those of Mr. Albery's pieces that have met with the least success ought to have given him a literary position which, I fear, he will not attain, even were he to produce a dozen comedies as successful as *The Two Roses*. They did not hit the taste of the public, or they were not well acted in some parts, and so they are consigned to oblivion. As with the unsuccessful dramatic works of others, the care, the thought, the imagination, the humour expended on them are all thrown away; and the author, it may be, justly disgusted with such want of appreciation on the part of the only public to whom he can appeal, takes to vamping up semi-improper French farces. Nothing can better illustrate the estimation in which dramatic authors are now held, than the fact that any one who tinkers up a translation of a French play, condensing and cutting so effectually as to destroy the development and artistic harmony of the original, exhibiting the dramatic effects without the dramatic causes, and retaining the situations without the elaboration of character which leads up to them, is ranked by the "cultivated" play-goer quite as highly as the man who designs his own plot, draws his own characters, and depends on his own brains for his dialogue. By all means let us have the best works of French dramatists performed on our stage; but let us see them as the authors wrote them. Men like Victorien Sardou, Emile Augier, or Meilhac and Halévy write in the spirit of true artists; and neither art nor morality gains anything by the quasi-purifying process of evisceration to which their works are subjected.

No doubt the popularity of adaptations from the French with the managers and with the public is one of the impediments to the existence of high-class original dramas among us; but until plays can be printed as literary works, and recognised as such, I fear the stage will attract but few authors of capacity, and the elements of many good plays will be frittered away in diffuse and ill-digested novels.

MADAME PATTI AS AN ACTRESS.

By Henry Hersee.

ACTING of the highest quality is rarely met with on the operatic stage. Lyric artists have to devote almost the whole of their lives to the study and practice of vocalisation, and can rarely find

time to make acting a serious study. In most of the chief vocal academies there are professors of declamation, but their duties are generally discharged in a merely perfunctory manner, and although their lessons may be better than none, they do little more than convey general ideas of pronunciation, emphasis, and articulation. On the dramatic stage an actor must rise by degrees, and cannot be engaged for first-rate parts until he has acquired the art of acting. On the operatic boards it is not uncommon to see débûts made by novices who scarcely know how to walk across the stage, but who are allowed to appear in characters which would task the powers of accomplished artists. A fine voice is supposed to be sufficiently attractive to compensate for the absence of histrionic ability, and even of proper vocal culture. It is not surprising that under this *régime* good acting has become rare on the lyric stage, and that operatic performances are sometimes little better than fancy-dress concerts. It is only by the force of innate dramatic genius that an artist can break through the trammels of conventionality with which the lyric stage is beset, and genius of this kind has seldom been so vividly and unmistakably revealed as in the acting of Madame Adelina Patti. The merit of this great artist's acting may justly claim special notice in a journal devoted to the highest interests of dramatic art, and the subject can hardly be discussed without suggesting important considerations to students.

Madame Adelina Patti is equally successful in comedy and tragedy, because of the imaginative power with which she is largely endowed. Whether she has to impersonate the coquettish Rosina or the unhappy Margherita, she is able to call up an ideal conception of either character, and to reproduce it visibly and audibly, by the aid of her acting and elocution. The marvel is that her imagination seems to be guided by so unerring a dramatic instinct that her impersonations always have a life-like reality, and she looks, moves, and speaks as if she were actually the ideal personage whom she represents. This is always noticeable when she is mutely listening or watching. Her facial expression throws light upon all that is going on around her; and, were all her comrades to imitate her example, complete dramatic illusion would be secured, and the value of operatic performances would be incalculably enhanced. From her imaginative power springs the spontaneity which is a conspicuous charm in her acting. As in every impersonation she reproduces the ideal presented to her imagination, conventionality is out of the question. The spontaneity of her acting has often been manifested by her sudden adoption of new "business," suggested to her imagination while acting. A few years back she thrilled her audience by an impromptu effect in the "Miserere" scene of *Il Trovatore*. When the voice of

her imprisoned lover, Manrico, was suddenly heard in the opening strains of "Ah che la morte," she gave one gasp of wondering horror and fell suddenly to the ground, helpless. How she was recalled to life by the tones of her lover's voice—how she raised herself on one elbow to listen—how, too faint to walk, she crawled to the prison-door—how she tried to dislodge the stones of the prison walls with her slender fingers, will never be forgotten by those who saw her play Leonora on that memorable occasion. She subsequently declared that she had not premeditated this startling effect, and could hardly remember what she had done. In this instance, as in others which might be cited, she had so completely merged her own identity in that of the character she impersonated that the impulse suddenly originated by her imagination was irresistible.

Imaginative power may ensure intensity of emotional expression, and the spontaneity which renders acting life-like and natural; but in order to secure the highest results, it must be combined with that refined faculty of judgment which is designated "good taste"; and this is prominent in Madame Adelina Patti's acting, as well as in her singing. By the aid of this faculty, she discriminates between logical realism and acceptable dramatic effects, and polishes her conceptions until they become *beaux idéals*. When, as Norina, in *Don Pasquale*, she torments the bewildered old Don almost out of his life, she occasionally lets the audience see that she really pities the victim whom she is torturing for his ultimate benefit. When in the last act of *La Traviata* her lover, Alfredo, repulses her suggestion that he should marry, and she imperatively bids him do so, her "Io lo voglio!" is firmly uttered; but a momentary contraction of her lips and a swift shudder of her frame betray the pangs which she conceals from him. When, as the heroine of *Aïda*, she submits with the meekness of a slave to the taunts of her mistress, Amneris, the remembrance that she is herself a royal princess occasionally flashes eloquently from her eyes—swiftly to die out as she recollects that she is a captive. When, in *L'Etoile du Nord*, she peeps into the tent where her lover Peter (the disguised Czar) is getting drunk in the company of two free-and-easy vivandières, she is not content with displaying feminine jealousy and wrath, but shows that her heart sickens at Peter's self-degradation. It is in subtle touches of expression like these, no less than in her realisation of grander conceptions, that this great artist shows how truly genius has been styled "the faculty of taking infinite pains." To multiply instances will be needless; but an article on Madame Adelina Patti's acting would be incomplete without some reference to her new rendering of Violetta's final scene in *La Traviata*. Instead of singing Violetta's dying words while reclining in a chair,

she suddenly rose, as if by that supreme effort which has been likened to the last flicker of a candle, tottered a few paces forward, stood with her eyes gazing fixedly before her, as if already penetrating the veil of futurity, *spoke* her final utterances in deep, thrilling tones; then suddenly collapsed, and fell back apparently lifeless. The effect was so vividly, terribly real, that some moments elapsed before the spectators recovered from the emotion excited by this wonderful display of histrionic genius, never to be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to be present. As an actress, Madame Patti is fortunate in the possession of striking personal advantages —a lithe, graceful figure, finely cut and expressive features, dark, eloquent eyes, and an exquisitely rich, brilliant, and sympathetic voice. Her greatest charm, however, is the intellectuality which irradiates her impersonations. It is this which imparts fascination to her acting, and sympathetic quality to her voice; and the lesson may be advantageously studied by those who are emulous of her fame. It is not by adherence to tradition and conventionality, but by the perfect elaboration of original conceptions, that Madame Adelina Patti's acting has become almost equal in merit to her superb vocalisation.

A LONDON ROMANCE.

By Joseph Hatton.

SHE was a beautiful woman. How I came to know her was in this way.

One morning I received from a correspondent in Scotland an exciting account of a dashing feat of horsemanship performed by a lady of rare courage and feminine loveliness. The story appeared in one of the journals, and my friend followed it up by sending me cabinet portraits of the heroine. The sun-painter rarely flatters, except under the manipulation of Van der Weyde or Sarony. The portraits displayed the charms of a lovely and aristocratic-looking young woman. My friend had not known her long, but he was evidently in love with her. He informed me that she was a lady of birth and wealth, and that she was going to give her family umbrage by entering upon a course of professional study for the stage. She had already signified her intention of removing to London, and as she was an orphan and of age, no one had any control over her. She would call upon me for advice, and he hoped I would do all I could for her. I was under some obligation of courtesy to my Scotch friend, and I assured him that the lady should not lack good advice, and any useful introductions I could give her.

In due course her ladyship called. She was all my correspondent's fancy had painted her. Tall, a dainty figure with sparkling eyes, and a healthy complexion, Miss Ogilvie Westerne spoke with a slight Scotch accent, that added an additional charm to her musical voice. She was splendidly dressed, and she was evidently quite innocent of London life. She was very angry with my correspondent for sending her portrait to me. It seemed to her a liberty, and I gathered at once from her blushes and confusion that she knew how much the poor man loved her. I gave her some useful advice, and she called upon me again, giving me to understand at this second visit that she did not like Mr. Ryder's tutorship; he was too severe for her, though she thought he was a fair elocutionist. She thought she should place herself in the professional hands of Mr. Hermann Vezin. "I have not come to London to act," she said. "I have been in the habit of writing for the press. I have a diploma as a practitioner in one of the Scotch hospitals. I have studied politics. I have written a play; and so you see I have a good many irons in the fire. What I want to do first is to buy a newspaper."

"Have you a large fortune?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied, smiling.

"Then you had better have a theatre as well as a newspaper," I said, "if you are anxious to get your troubles over quickly."

"You think you are talking to the inexperienced girl described by your Edinburgh correspondent," she said. "Let me undeceive you; I have been my own mistress almost since I was a child, and have had a long career of work; I have invested money in many strange ventures and never lost any; I am lucky, and when you talk sarcastically of my having a theatre you don't dream that before six months are over my head I *shall* have a newspaper *and* a theatre; I can afford it."

I was amused to see this girlish-looking enthusiast take the press and the drama by their respective collars in this way; but her downright earnestness and enthusiasm compelled my respect.

"You have agents or solicitors, Miss Westerne?" I asked.

"Of course, oh, yes," she said.

"Then ask their advice before you embark in these speculations."

"No, no; I never ask their advice; I simply tell them what I wish. I want you to advise me, and if you will let me know of any good newspaper in the market for sale, I will buy it. And though I would not hurt your feelings for the world, I shall ask you to make it a business matter between us."

"Pardon me," I said; "I will be no party to an enterprise that cannot fail to be a source of serious anxiety to a lady whom I am asked to help with my advice. Can you guess how much money has

been invested in the little journal in the office of which you are now sitting?"

"I have not the least idea," she replied.

"Twenty thousand pounds," I said.

She was not frightened.

"And I would sell it for a couple of thousand this moment—but not to you, not to you."

She only smiled and said I was very frank and matter-of-fact, but she begged me to understand that her financial resources were sufficient to warrant her in buying a newspaper and taking a theatre. First, however, she must have a clever business man and secretary. She looked at me with a fascinating glance, and I confess I began to admire the brave, daring Scotch beauty.

It was a week before she called again. She had taken rooms in a house where the people had not treated her quite properly. The proprietor had evidently tried to gain some undue influence over her by prying into her affairs.

"The truth is, my dear sir, I had better tell you who I am, and then you will advise me with confidence, and I shall return your own candour with an honesty that I am sure you will respect. I am the illegitimate daughter of the Earl of ——. I have an estate in Scotland, and a considerable income which is paid to me quarterly by the Earl's agents. I am extravagant. I have always been accustomed to buy everything I like, and this person has found that I owe some debts in the North, and he has been making inquiries about me, and opening my letters. The accounts are only a few hundred pounds, and my agents will pay them, but the quarter is not up; and don't you think it is a very shameful thing for this man to try and get money out of me (I have already lent him a hundred pounds) by spying upon me? What ought I to do?"

I gave her a letter of introduction to an eminent solicitor, who speedily put a stop to the machinations of the spy, and then Miss Ogilvie Westerne, who called upon me in a carriage and pair, attended by obsequious flunkeys, informed me that she had resolved upon taking a house and sending for her Scotch servants. A few days afterwards a house agent wrote to me, as is usual, inquiring if Miss Westerne was a responsible person. I replied, and said what I knew and thought, and referred the applicant to the lady's agents. Then I thought my wife might call upon her ladyship, and she did. Further, my wife took compassion upon her splendid loneliness and accompanied her to a theatre. The partner of my joys and sorrows was not favourably impressed with the lady's manners on this occasion, and while she was detailing to me her objections I received a registered letter from my Edinburgh correspondent. He had been

misinformed as to the lady's antecedents. She was not the woman he had taken her for. There were strange rumours about her. She was wanted in many quarters. He begged to withdraw his recommendation of her. Here was a *contretemps!* I saw my lady the next day, laid this letter before her, and asked for an explanation.

"Come with me, my dear sir," she said; "come at once, my carriage is at the door. I will explain; but I beg of you to come to my house."

I went, to discover the perfidy of man in all its hideous colours. She showed me a packet of love-letters from the North; showed me an offer of marriage from my epistolary friend. They were couched in the warmest terms.

"I have refused him only this week, as you see, and he has sworn to be revenged; and this is his method. What do you think of a man who can be so base?"

"All that a man should think," I said; "your explanation is satisfactory."

I wrote to my Edinburgh friend. He sent me an advertisement in which the lady was "wanted" indeed. Other circumstances excited my suspicions. I wrote to the lady, requesting her to give me references to her agents and solicitors, and until I had received them begged her not to call upon me any more. She replied in a dignified note, saying that she would not trespass further upon my courtesy; some day I should know her better, and when we met in society on that future day I should, no doubt, apologise for suspecting her. Then came letters from tradespeople to whom she had mentioned me as a reference. I wrote and requested Miss Westerne not to use my name on pain of legal proceedings. She retorted scornfully and desisted, and presently came to live in my neighbourhood with her maids and housekeepers, her secretary and footmen, with her horses and carriages and dogs. I did myself the honour of cutting her dead, and cautioning everybody against her. But she was so handsome, she looked so happy, she drove such splendid cattle, she spoke Italian so fluently, and became so popular with tradespeople and local visitors, that I began to think I had made a mistake, though I was contented to walk in the shadow of my neighbour's magnificence.

Within three months the splendid bubble burst. Miss Westerne's housekeeper, a fashionably-dressed lady, was brought before the magistrates for swindling. Her mistress succeeded in eluding the police. She had been buying everything everywhere, and selling again, and otherwise "spoiling the Egyptians" of the West End of pictures, jewellery, silks, satins, cabinets, and goods of the costliest kind. As fast as they were delivered at the front door, the treasures disappeared

at the back. The housekeeper was remanded. Finally, she was discharged on the bail of a gentleman who came forward and said he had lent her mistress a thousand pounds. She was not Miss Westerne at all, but a married woman. The police believed she had sailed for America, whither she had shipped large quantities of luggage. A week ago I read an account in a foreign journal of a beautiful lady, whose charities and enterprises, literary, journalistic, and theatrical, had won the admiration of a colonial province. They called her "my lady," and she was about to marry a millionaire. I wonder if she is the fair horsewoman of my Scotch friend's short, romantic dream. I bear her no animosity; I don't even sympathise with her London victims; several of them said I was a brute. She did not join in this sweeping denunciation. She only raised her white hands with a sweet, womanly protest against my unjust suspicions. If you should ever meet her, you will know her by her black eyes, her arched and pencilled brows, her white teeth, her tall, graceful figure, her pretty foot, and a slight Scotch accent, that gave a siren-like music to her voice which proved irresistible to many a wary Londoner during the merry days of a brilliant season.

THE LAST PANACEA.

By Kate Field.

THERE are some new things under the sun, coming naturally from that world which, though oldest in formation, is newest in civilisation, and which, as if in revenge for being so long left out in the cold, makes up for lost time by conceiving more inventions in one year than the past ever dreamed of in a century. Professor Graham Bell, of Boston, invents a telephone whereby opera and theatre will shortly be turned on like gas and water. Telephonic metres are merely a question of time, and every household will be taxed according to the amount of Patti, Irving, *Olivia*, *Diplomacy*, Toole, or *Our Boys* consumed. Mr. Edison invents the phonograph, and living actors know that their voices are destined to be heard for ever. How Mr. Irving wooed and won Lady Anne; how Mr. Vezin recited Poe's "Raven"; how Mr. Sothern excited roars of laughter in Dundreary, will be as evident to posterity as Euclid's axioms. With a photograph to the eye, and a phonograph to the ear, future generations may read the history of the stage. Happy future, to be able to live backwards—to review in a moment the genius of ages!

Last, but most marvellous of all, comes a medical discovery

appropriate to the season of the year. Now that actors and singers are dreaming of a holiday; are looking at their tongues, feeling their pulses, and wondering what they shall do to be saved from everlasting exhaustion, it is well for them to peruse and ponder on a receipt for perfect health, aptly called the "criticism cure," invented by the Socialists of the Oneida community, and considered to be the most advanced of perfectionist ideas. The habit of "mutual criticism" owes its origin to a secret society of theological students, who were in training for missionaries at Williams College, in 1808. Andover brought forth a similar society, and both these associations endured thirty or forty years—if, indeed, they do not still exist. Clergymen admit the beneficence of results, although confessing to much spiritual suffering in consequence. There was a soul of goodness within the criticism. Though a similar custom has long been followed in their community, the Perfectionists have only recently discovered the miraculous power of criticism as a remedial agent in disease.

Let artists throw physic to the dogs and read the work on the "Criticism Cure," published in Oneida, at the office of the *American Socialist*. "The theory which this remedy adapts itself to," declares the author, "is that disease originates not in the blood, or stomach, or nerves, but *in the spirit;* and that a decisive operation there affects the whole system." Here is wisdom—"chunks of it." Now, mark how theory is made practical. Whenever a brother or sister is attacked by disease, "a committee of persons" is summoned for purposes of criticism. "The result, when administered sincerely, is almost universally to throw the patient into a perspiration, and to bring on a reaction of life against disease." On the appearance of diphtheria in the Oneida community, three cases terminated fatally. When 112 communists lay prostrate, the disease was stopped "at one fell swoop" by an application of criticism——and ice! "An investigation showed that not one out of 59 cases of clear diphtheria treated with ice and criticism was lost." What the proportion of ice to criticism was the author fails to state—a grave oversight, as too much of either, particularly of the latter medicine, might be the death of a sensitive patient. Here is the testimony of a sufferer. "Being no better at night, but rather worse, I sent for a committee. Their criticism immediately threw me into a profuse perspiration, till I felt as though I had been in a bath; and before the committee left the room, my headache, backache, and fever were all gone. The criticism had an edge to it, and literally separated me from the spirit of disease that was upon me."

Behold the "cure" in one paragraph. Henceforth Hummums is unnecessary. The actor suffering from influenza has but to send

for "a committee" of brother actors, beg for their candid criticism on his last creation, and in fifteen minutes he will be restored to his profession. If one of Mr. Mapleson's prime donne sends him a note at five o'clock in the afternoon, declaring that, owing to sudden loss of voice, she will be unable to sing at night, the clever impressario need only assemble a trio of rival prime donne, send them as a committee to their suffering sister, with imperative instructions to speak their minds freely, and a profuse perspiration will quickly revive the drooping nightingale. Her scales will be more even, her trills more brilliant than ever, and Mr. Mapleson will beam with delight at having finally discovered a panacea for the ills of singing-birds. A great tragedian is at death's door. Physicians are in vain. A despairing public and still more despairing manager are at their wits' end. *The Theatre* is placed before them. They hear for the first time of the "Criticism Cure." They send for all the available actors who play the same line of business. They are admitted separately to the sick man's bedside, the least critical going first, the most violent going last. The patient is gradually restored to consciousness, and by the time the last pill is administered every pore opens, throws off disease, and the stage retains its brightest ornament. Actors deprived of their holidays by successful "runs" can obtain the required tonic by putting up the following notice in their favourite clubs :—

"Feeling the Need of an Entire Change of System, Mr.——
Requests His Worst Enemies To meet Him in Committee At the Earliest Possible Date
And Sit on Him to Their Hearts' Content. Fees In Proportion to Perspiration."

The dramatic author whose successful pen is driving him into brain fever may call together a meeting of his critics, making them solemnly swear to speak the truth that lies within, and the brain will be restored to its normal condition, particularly if the weather be warm and criticism with "an edge to it" be tempered with ice. In fact, no artist need die of anything but old age; and envy, malice, and all uncharitableness will be hailed as benefactions. "Will the day never come when the German man may say to his German brother,—O thou ass"? Yea, verily, he may say it in all languages, and restore the ass to life.

MODERN AUDIENCES.

By Frederic C. Broughton.

"The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For those who live to please, must please to live."

VERY true indeed, Doctor Johnson, as was everything that you wrote. True, years ago, when we had a Goldsmith living to write us *She Stoops to Conquer*, or that strangely-neglected comedy *The Good-natured Man*, that would baffle and defeat the vogue of all the farcical comedies that nowadays we go to see. And equally true this morning. But in those days the English public was a playgoing one. Men and women paid to see the play, and went to see it, because they loved it. Now they scorn alike plays and players, and, as a rule, elect to stay away. Though theatres have multiplied of late, it cannot be said that audiences have vastly increased. Of course there is a large playgoing public, but even amongst an ordinary audience the true playgoers are but few. Many there are who go to the theatre, even who go often, but as a rule the modern audience is composed not of a gregarious but of a most isolated type. They go not to see the play, but because it is the fashion, or because they are bored. They are not, as a rule, persons who can in any way be classed together. They come from the four winds, and probably they go back to them. But they are of the most indiscriminating class, of the most exacting kind of men. They give nothing. But they ask everything; and if they do not receive it, as is, indeed, impossible, judging by the nature of their exactions, they speedily grow wearied. It is not only that a man is required to possess the manners of a Chesterfield, the erudition of a Bacon, the beauty of Venus, and the voice of Apollo, all combined at a salary of three pounds, may be of thirty shillings, for forty weeks out of the fifty-two, and for thirty years out of the three-score and ten allotted unequally to humanity. But he must possess also all the cardinal virtues. To please the playgoer an artist should be the godchild of all the fairies, and not one of them must have failed to attend his christening ceremony. Playgoers too often pay a player in inverse ratio to his deserts. They as often reward him in like proportion. Too often they assume the virtues that he does not possess, accredit him with vices that are not natural to him, the while they blindly ignore every one of his better qualities.

Modern audiences have done all that lies in their power—and too often they are well-nigh omnipotent—to crush, or at least to

dwarf, English art, to discourage promise and to retard perfection. They have contrived (more by ignorant stupidity than actual malice) to advertise the stock reproach that we have no drama, and that our stage is inferior to that of any country equally civilised. For centuries the drama has been suppressed and scorned, while the name of our greatest dramatist is revered as if he were really the representative of English honour, English intellect, patriotism, art, and even religion itself.

But the major part of this reverence exists only in the mind's eye, and for all practical purposes it is as idle as a Jew's charity to a Christian or a Mahommedan. The very persons who dignify the poet, elect, as a rule, to disparage the interpreter of his poetry. Nay, more; as a rule those who decry the stage and deplore its decadence belong to that isolated portion of the public that goes to the theatre once in six months, and are the very persons to decry the drama—the very ones to prevent the desired increase of modern audiences.

It is nothing to them that Mr. Irving is playing Mathias, that Miss Ellen Terry is Olivia, such an Olivia as even dear old Oliver Goldsmith could scarcely have dreamed of; it matters nought to them that Mr. Vezin is appearing as the Man o' Airlie, or that Mrs. Kendal plays Dora to the life. For they have a preconceived idea, and they carry it with them to the theatre and back again. Modern audiences are as so many sheep. They wait until some one shall precede them through a gap in the theatrical hedge, and then they follow blindly. When Mrs. Bancroft, tired out with burlesque, elected to play comedy, and that of the new and natural type, they admired her at once, and why? Simply because it was the fashion. For years such men as Charles Dickens, J. R. Planché, Mark Lemon, and Shirley Brooks had recognised the little lady's genius. But the public had not; the public had only seen in her a graceful little lady dancing jigs, and until they were told how clever she was they knew nothing of it.

The fact is this, and simply this, the English are a non-play-going race. *Coram populo,* they applaud the very actor whom privately they crucify. They are as selfish as the Southern American ladies, who impale beetles upon a pin. They admire them because they minister to their enjoyment, and care nought for their sufferings. The actor who is applauded to-night, fêted and recalled, will be "pulled to pieces" over afternoon tea to-morrow; and as they are ungrateful and undiscerning, so are also modern audiences, as a rule, servile. When *opera bouffe*—and that of the least worthy description—was in vogue, they admired *opera bouffe;* and when tragedy came in, tragedy was "the only wear." So it has ever

been, so it will ever be, unless an entire change comes over the mask of the drama. Managers are omnipotent. The public pulse quickens at their touch. It is not a question of the performance, or the criticism, or even of the merit of the play, for the British public always reminds me of the company in a theatre of Neapolitan Polichinelli. Very nice-looking; quite well-behaved, so long as in a good temper; very well dressed. But, after all, only marionettes waiting until some clever manipulator shall pull the wires.

SHAKSPERE IN BLACKFRIARS.

By Frederick Hawkins.

IN the year 1576 it was decreed by the Lord Mayor of London that no players should ply their avocation within the boundaries of the city, and the principal theatrical company of the time, the "servants of the Earl of Pembroke," with James Burbage at their head, obtained permission to set up a theatre in a portion of the Blackfriars monastery. Here, it seemed they would at once be near the centre of activity and beyond the reach of persecution. Their new home was singularly rich in historical associations. The monastery was built by the Black Friars in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, on a piece of ground granted to them at the instance of the then Archbishop of Canterbury. This ground, on which the Roman wall had stood, was found to be insufficient for their purpose, and to give them more room the Tower of Montfichet and several houses on the Baynard's Castle side were pulled down. The building appears to have extended from the site of Apothecaries' Hall to Thames-street, covering what is now known as Printing-house-square. The work finished, the Friars repaired in solemn procession from their old place in Holborn to their new quarters. Before long fortune began to smile upon the new monastery. Every immunity which religious institutions could enjoy was accorded to it. Edward I. and his Queen enriched it in various ways. Royal charters and records were committed to the care of the Friars. The church, which was elaborately ornamented, became a fashionable place of interment, and it was believed that Satan had no power over the souls of persons who were buried at Blackfriars in the habit of the Order. The founder of the monastery, Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent, and his wife Margaret, sister of Alexander II. of Scotland, found their last resting-place here; also Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, beheaded in 1470, and Tonchet, Earl of Audley, beheaded in 1497.

In the reign of Henry VIII. the monastery acquired additional importance. There the Black Parliament was opened, the question as to Katharine of Arragon's divorce considered, and the fall of Wolsey in part accomplished. Then came the suppression of the monasteries, and on the 15th of November, 1538, the revenue of the Black Friars was surrendered to the king by "Bishop Fisher and fifteen brethren." The Prior's lodgings and the hall were sold to Sir Francis Bryan, but in 1551 Edward VI. granted to the Master of the Revels, Sir Thomas Cawarden, the "whole house, scite or circuit, compass and precinct." From that time Blackfriars assumed a new aspect. Fashion made it her chief resort; crowds of richly-dressed ladies and gentlemen repaired thither every afternoon in their gaily-painted barges or coaches. Here and there, perhaps, a Friar appeared on the scene, mournfully contrasting the pomps and vanities he saw before him with the odour of sanctity which formerly prevailed in the precinct. But another blow was in store for these holy men. Sir Thomas Cawarden had been succeeded in the tenancy of the once monastic building by Lords Sussex and Hunsdon, and certain rooms near their own were now assigned to Master Burbage and his players for purposes theatrical.

The new theatre was not established without a struggle. The Dowager Lady Russell, Lord Hunsdon, and twenty-eight inhabitants of the liberty of Blackfriars, immediately presented a petition to the Privy Council praying that Burbage might be forbidden to erect a playhouse there. Great annoyance, they said, would be occasioned, "not only to all the noblemen and gentlemen thereabout inhabiting, but also a general inconvenience to all the inhabitants of the same precinct, both by reason of the great resort and gathering together of all manner of vagrant and lewd persons, that under colour of resorting to the plays will come thither and work all manner of mischief and also to the great pestering and filling up of the same precinct if it should please God to send any visitation of sickness, as heretofore hath been; for that the same precinct is already grown very populous." Moreover, the playhouse being near the church, divine service would be interrupted by the "drummes and trumpettes." The petition had no effect, probably because Lord Sussex, the Chamberlain, was on the side of the players. The Lord Mayor, in order to put a stop to the performances, claimed jurisdiction over the precinct, but without success. The early history of the theatre is involved in obscurity, but it is known that Lely's *Alexander and Campaspes* was played there in 1584, and in Stephen Gosson's *Plays Confuted in Five Actions*, supposed to have been published in 1582, we are incidentally told that "a great many comedies" had been represented "at the Black-Fryers." It is easy to believe that

Peele, Kyd, Nash, and Greene were among those who wrote for this theatre, although many of their earlier productions have not been preserved.

It was at one time supposed that Shakspere had a share in the Blackfriars Theatre as early as 1589, but the document on which this supposition was founded proves to be a forgery. Be that as it may, he had come to London two or three years previously, and if it is true that he turned an honest penny by holding horses at a play-house door, it was only in aristocratic Blackfriars that he could have had the chance of doing so. By the year 1596, when the building was purchased by Burbage, the poet had become a well-known dramatist and actor, and had acquired a pecuniary interest in the property. Many plays known to students of our old dramatic literature were produced soon afterwards at the Blackfriars Theatre; such as Jonson's *Poetaster* and *Cynthia's Revels*, Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois*, and Marston's *Malcontents*. Some of these pieces were played by a number of youths, who on the accession of James I. received the title of "Children of Her Majesty's Revels," and were authorised to play "within the Blackfriars." The Globe was a summer and the Blackfriars a winter theatre, but in the year 1604 they were open at the same time, a fact which leads us to think that while the regular actors were in Southwark the Children of the Revels were playing on the northern bank of the river. In 1609, after representing Jonson's *Epicœne*, the younger actors migrated to the Whitefriars Theatre, probably to the intense satisfaction of Shakspere and his colleagues.

In imagination we see the author of *Hamlet* as, clad in doublet and hose, with a rapier at his side, he leaves the Mermaid in Friday-street and walks leisurely to the theatre to make himself a "motley to the view" in his character of an actor. A man of medium height, with long auburn hair and short pointed beard and moustaches of the same hue, light hazel eyes, and an abnormally lofty forehead. His demeanour is dignified and even grave; but the animated expression of his face leads you to suppose that he has just been engaged in one of his "wit combats" with rare old Ben. There is something about him which impresses you in spite of yourself, and many glance back at him as he passes along. He halts for a short time in Ireland-yard, for in that now dingy quarter there is a house which he intends to buy. This house "abuts upon a street leading doune to Pudle Wharf," St. Andrew's-hill, "in the east part, right again the King's Majesty's wardrobe." The distance between it and the theatre is less then a hundred yards. What does he play this afternoon—the Ghost in *Hamlet*, or Adam in *As You Like It?* Each of these characters is associated with his name. There is no direct evidence

that any of his plays were originally produced here, though a good case might be made out in support of the theory that *Hamlet* and the *Taming of the Shrew*, to say nothing of other plays assignable to a period anterior to the building of the Globe Theatre, first saw the light in Blackfriars. But we have lost sight for a moment of Master Shakspere. He is now entering the stage door of the Blackfriars Theatre. It is nearly three o'clock; the first of the three trumpet-blasts which announce a performance is given, and a flag is run up on the roof of the building. While the actor is dressing we will take a glance at the interior of the house. Lords and ladies of the Court sit in the boxes or at the side of the stage; cavaliers unaccompanied by ladies stretch themselves on the ground and call to their pages for pipes and tobacco; the playgoers who pay the lowest price for admission are standing at the back of the house. The performance commences, the scene of action, in default of moveable decoration, being written in chalk on a board at the side of the stage. There is no roof to the house, and when the sun goes down the candles will be lighted. Presently Master Shakspere appears. He meets with a hearty reception, for he is immensely liked at Court, the nobles and wits and poets of the time are attached to the man and proud of his friendship, and as an actor, in the words of Lord Southampton, "he is of good account in the company."

Having amassed a comparatively large fortune, Shakspere retired to Stratford-on-Avon to enjoy his *otium cum dignitate*, but is said to have revisited London every year. In 1619, three years after the poet's death, the city authorities had the temerity to close the theatre. They soon found themselves in the wrong box, and the licence was formally renewed. Ten years later a company of French actors hired the theatre and put on a farce in which the female characters were played by women. This was too great an innovation; and the foreigners, as we learn from a paper discovered by Mr. Collier in the Primate's library at Lambeth, were "hissed, hooted, and pippin-pelted from the stage." In 1631 the Puritans in the precinct presented a petition to Laud, then Bishop of London, as to the injury and inconvenience occasioned by the numerous coaches. The Privy Council determined to shut up the theatre, but on reflection contented itself with issuing regulations that the coaches should not be allowed to go nearer the place than St. Paul's Churchyard on the one side and Fleet Conduit on the other, and should be driven away as soon as the occupants had alighted. The long-sought suppression of the playhouse, however, was only deferred. Like all other places of amusement, it was closed in 1642, and for good in 1647. Meanwhile another part of the old

monastery had been converted into the royal printing-house, and here it was that the Prayer-book in which the seventh commandment appeared as "Thou shalt commit adultery" was published. The whole of the monastery was reduced to a heap of ashes by the Great Fire, which raged in Blackfriars with particular fury. The printing-house was rebuilt by Charles II., but after standing for seventy-six years it shared the fate of its predecessor, and a third was erected in 1743. Entick, writing in 1766, speaks of the new office, which was built of red brick, as being "accounted the most capacious and commodious of its kind in the whole world:" what would be said of it now! It was situated at the end of "Printing-house-court," which by some demolitions was converted into a square. In 1783 the premises passed into the hands of the founder of *The Times*. Many interesting discoveries have been made in Printing-house-square. Four pewter cases, with rings at the tops, were once found in a recess. Each contained a human head, probably the last existing remains of a friar executed for high treason. Twenty or thirty years ago, under *The Times* office, some workmen came upon a portion of the Roman wall, surmounted first by a reparation in Norman, and then by the remains of a passage and window which had belonged to the monastery. Nothing connected with the Blackfriars Theatre, I believe, has been brought to light. For a relic of Shakspere we would part with even the friars' heads and the fragment of the Roman wall; but it is at least some compensation to know that in passing through Playhouse-yard—a thoroughfare near Printing-house-square—we cross the site of a theatre for which he worked, and in which, I am tempted to think, his *Hamlet* was played for the first time.

THE THEATRE No1 NEW SERIES

WOODBURYTYPE

Yours sincerely

Henry Irving.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

Portraits.

II.—MR. HENRY IRVING.

THE most popular tragedian of our time lives in a busy West-end thoroughfare, within easy distance of club-land. His favourite room, however, is so near the top of the house that the roar of the traffic is almost lost. You at once feel that to give a full description of this room and its contents more than one visit is needed. The light of day, subdued by stained-glass windows, reveals a scene of confusion at which a lover of order would hold up his hands in consternation, but which is not without a certain charm of its own. The open piano, the chairs, the tables, the sofa, and other furniture appear to have been dropped through the roof by chance; volumes from the many bookshelves and racks about the room lie on the floor; a tiger-skin rug has been thrown carelessly on one side, and boxes of cigars are to be seen in close proximity to old china, the most dignified of antique chairs, and portfolios of rare engravings. Then, as though to show that histrionic distinction is not without its drawbacks, several MSS. and letters lie on a table near—not in—the centre of the room. The books are indicative of a healthy and catholic taste. There are disquisitions on art in all its forms, histories of nations and of costume, old and recent editions of Shakspere and other dramatists, works of criticism, books of reference, biographies and poems. Some of the pictures on the delicately-coloured walls have a peculiar value; this portrait of Signor Rossi was sent by himself to "l'amico Irving," and that little picture of Othello in armour was drawn by Mr. Tenniel in order to show how the Moor should appear in the second act. The well-known portrait of Charles Dickens in his later years is also before you. There are also a bust of Sir John Herschel, medallions of Charles Young and Emile Devrient, and what not. From the mantelpiece, which is richly decorated, a Louis Quinze clock makes itself heard. In this room, unless rumour is incorrect, Mr. Irving sits until the small hours of the morning, sometimes in conversation over a cigar with a friend, but more frequently, we suspect, to think out a part or invent the innumerable details by which the conception he has formed of it may be realised.

In the words of a scholarly critic, Mr. Irving is the most imaginative actor of our time, and it is to the operation of this faculty, joined to a rare mastery of the resources of histrionic art, that we must refer the thoroughness of his work, the fascination which even repulsive characters acquire in his hands, the breadth and vividness

of his acting, and the peculiar influence he exercises upon an audience from almost the moment of his appearance on the scene. His mental vision goes beyond mere externals, penetrates far beneath the surface. He not only lays bare the chief springs of action in a character; the undercurrents of unspoken and impalpable thought are clearly indicated. In doing this, of course, he is materially aided by his acquirements as an actor, which include the results of careful observation. His action, the movements of his face, the tones of his voice, and his dress and by-play are at once remarkable in themselves and nicely adapted to the end he has in view. The art of the actor, however, is but seldom visible, and the impersonations which must have involved the deepest study are those which are the most successful in producing the effect of spontaneity. That his powers extend over a wide field there can be no doubt. In the expression of irony or pathos, sarcasm or tenderness, anguish or passion, grim humour or austere severity, he is equally at home. For good proofs of his versatility you have only to contrast the scenes with Ophelia and the Queen in *Hamlet* with the last scene in the *Lyons Mail;* the quiet dignity and pathos of his Charles I. with the sardonic humour and terrible vindictiveness of his Louis XI., his murder scene in *Macbeth* with the grasp of high comedy which distinguishes his Richard III. The whole force of his mind, in fact, is evidently thrown into all he does. His acting, however, is not without drawbacks. In scenes of high passion or excitement he loses command over his voice, and consequently many of his words are lost. Again, the individuality of his impersonations is lessened by peculiarities of intonation and gesture and deportment; but on this point it is only fair to say that a great actor without strongly-marked mannerisms has not yet existed, and probably never will exist. Be that as it may, Mr. Irving's shortcomings are insignificant when taken in conjunction with his merits. The word "genius" is too often misapplied to persons endowed with rare talents; but it may be affirmed without hesitation that genius of a high order belongs to the subject of this hasty sketch.

Mr. Irving, according to a recently-published memoir, was placed in his twelfth year at a school near Lombard-street, and soon displayed considerable interest in everything dramatic, particularly in the recitals given at Christmas. Mr. Creswick being present at a rehearsal, taught young Irving how to grasp a dagger. In his fifteenth year the boy entered the office of an East-India merchant. But his heart was not in his work, and he joined a number of young men who met to get up dramatic entertainments. The applause he won determined him to seek fame and fortune on the stage, and after a probation of ten years he gained a footing in London.

The Day Will Come.

A NOVELETTE IN THREE PARTS.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

I.—My Story.
II.—His Story.
III.—Our Story.

PART I.

My Story.—I tell it to the Boss of Silver Bar—A hint at his own dark history—How I fell in love with an actress—We meet—A shadow falls upon our dreams—We are parted—The lamb and the vulture—My partner is strangely moved—The mystery of Margaret Willoughby—Who is she?

THERE were two of us in Pendleton's Gulch who were not popular with the other miners in the neighbourhood of Silver Bar. George Newbolde was "well enough," the men said, when he was "on the tare"; but his "sober bouts" were long, and full of morbid reflections. They pitied me, his partner; though they thought I was too proud for the society of Silver Bar. Fortunately I was "a civil-spoken-chap," they said, and under "George's" protection, or my high-and-mighty ways might have ended in a cheap funeral.

George Newbolde was five-and-twenty. He looked ten years older. He had the influence of a man of fifty among the rough miners of Silver Bar, Nevada. When he was wild drunk, which happened about once in three months, he was "the Boss" of the entire region. It was not a word and a blow with George; it was quicker than that. His pistol first, his remarks afterwards. But he was always in the right. He was never so drunk that he did not stand on the side of justice. They knew that, this community of men living outside the pale of the law. Moreover, George was a Hercules in strength. Broad shoulders, narrow hips, a lithe figure, dark hair, hazel eyes, a square forehead, he was a picture of health and strength; and even in his ugliest moments his voice was soft as his hand was hard. His intervals of sobriety were characterised by a moody, silent gravity. At these times he was surly, and his conversation was characterised by a grim, sarcastic humour. The miners of Pendleton's Gulch said they didn't know when they liked him least, drunk or sober. There was only this in favour of his teetotal days: he didn't want to kill anybody at these times, though he tempted

other people's knives and pistols most when he put his own weapons into his bitter tongue.

I had only known George a few months; but he took a fancy to me the very first day I appeared at Silver Bar, and in less than six weeks I was his partner, the sharer of his fortunes and his hut. Whatever his mood, he was always gentle with me. About his own age, I was weak in physique compared to him. I had no beard. I was a light-blue-eyed young fellow, and though not without spirit, I had none of the fire and daring of my companion. He extended his patronage to me from the moment I got down from the rickety stage-coach that deposited me at Silver Bar. Heaven knows, I needed a protector. I had come out among desperate men, on an almost reckless mission. The strong often have a strange affection for the weak. George Newbolde was suddenly inspired to take care of the newcomer. They called me "the young 'un" at first. Then they dubbed me "the proud 'un." The landlord's wife at the local whisky-bar called us the wolf and the lamb. George always spoke of me as his partner.

"We have all our queer histories, partner," said George one night, as we sat smoking our last pipe before turning in. "Tell me yours, and then you shall know mine. You have got into some scrape with your family. It's a woman, of course; it always is; and the upshot is money. You will be off to England when you're rich enough."

"That's true," I said, passing the bottle to my companion, who had just finished one of his sober fits, and was preparing to go "on a bender," as they called his seasons of dissipation.

"To-morrow I may be in no condition to listen to you; to-night I want to know all about you; I have the right to, as you are my partner, and the only human being I care a curse about—except one."

"And she's a woman, I suppose?" I suggested playfully.

"By this time, yes, partner, as you say, she's a woman—a woman."

He said this sadly, and as if addressing himself.

"Somehow, youngster," he went on, looking up at me, "you remind me of her, though I guess I should hardly know her if I saw her—my sister Meg."

"Your sister!" I said. "I envy you; I have no sister, but I have one of the best mothers that ever breathed."

"And I envy you!" he exclaimed quickly, "for if my mother stood before me now I would strike her dead!"

"No, no, don't say that," I replied.

"Well, well," he said, "don't let us talk of me or mine. I took to you, lad, the first minute I saw you, and something tells me it will be good for you, for both of us, that we should open out our

histories to each other, honestly and true—who we are, what we want here, why we came, what our objects in life are—like a pair of real partners; for, by heavens, Hickory Maynard, I love you as a man sometimes loves his brother!"

He rose, laid his hand affectionately on my shoulder, and walking to the door of the hut, looked at the stars as if he was labouring under some sudden emotion. I followed him and took his hand.

"George," I said, "it seems womanish, this kind of thing, but I shall never forget your tender, gentleman-like words; I reciprocate all your good feeling. Come and sit down, and let us talk."

"Womanish! my boy," he said; "don't call anything that is true and honest by that name. I think I'm a cursed fool, but no matter; you and me will be friends, whatever happens; eh, old man? Till death do us part. Now for it. Tell me all about yourself, while I smoke. I may be able to help you to all you want. I will if I can."

"I am sure you will, but it's not on that account that I am going to unburden myself, but out of gratitude, George, and because you want to know me better, and, indeed, that we may both know each other better."

"Fire away, partner," he replied, refilling his pipe, and trimming the lamp that swung from a beam above our heads.

"I came out here to make my fortune."

"And you shall, partner," said George.

"That I may go back and marry the girl I am engaged to."

"Of course," said George. "I was afraid of that. Well!"

"You would be glad if you knew her?"

"I might, I might not; but go on."

"I am that unfortunate Englishman, the younger son of an aristocratic family. My father was a spendthrift. He left the estates heavily mortgaged. My eldest brother was a true Maynard. He followed in his father's footsteps. He helped his brothers as well as he could, but he couldn't do much more than find them openings in the Government service. The youngest of six, I had but little chance, you may be sure; though, somehow, money enough was borrowed or begged to send me to Oxford. My mother, bless her heart, had some hopes of me, but she was very fond of me, and is now. Her love blinded her to my merits, or, I should say my, want of merit. I had no head for learning. I was plucked, and snubbed in consequence by everybody except her. She has a small income settled upon her, in such a way that she cannot part with it, and she lives on it, with an old trusty servant, in Doughty-street, Mecklenburg-square, London. I parted from her there eighteen months ago, for two years, and promised to come back to her a rich man."

"That brazen-face down at Silver Bar calls you a lamb. She's got no insight into human nature," said George. "There was more of the lion than the lamb in that promise, partner. Well!"

"You see I was in love, George, and it's astonishing what courage being in love gives a young fellow."

"Yes, I suppose it does," he said, looking at me in a curious, puzzled way.

"She is the most delightful girl in the world—true as steel, good as gold."

"Hold hard, partner!" said George; "all women are that till you find 'em out. Go on, lad, with the story, but never mind throwing in the testimonials as to character."

"Why, George, one would think you had been in love yourself, and had had a disappointment; though you said last night you never saw the woman that could make your pulse beat one additional throb in a month."

"That's true, partner; I was in love, though, when I was a lad of ten."

"With your sister?" I asked.

"Yes, partner, with my little sister Meg. She was six; but go on, lad, don't mind me. You know I'm a grumpy, loafing, good-for-nothing beggar. Don't mind what I say; I'll try and like that young lady of yours, because I like you. What's her name? There, see what interest I'm taking in her."

"Margaret Willoughby," I said.

He repeated the name, turning it over reflectively on his tongue.

"She's an actress. Against her will, though. Her father is a bad lot, I'm afraid."

"Margaret Willoughby," said George. "Yes; it's rather a pretty name."

"You see, when I was plucked, I came to London and lived with my mother; but I would do something for my living. My brothers cut me because I took a situation as a clerk in a merchant's office. I was not going to be a burden on my mother. One of my brothers was in the Guards; another in the diplomatic service; a third was Secretary of Legation: they all managed to get on pretty well. I earned two pounds a week in the City, and through a friend who was on the press I used to go to the theatres a good deal. One night at the Adelphi I fell in love. She was not a star. She only played a third-rate part. But I saw nobody else when she was on the stage, and wanted to see nobody else when she was off. She was quite a girl, not up to my shoulders; a little pretty, grey-eyed, gentle creature. I went home, and thought of her all night. I almost cried about her. It seemed as if I ought to pity her; though why I could not tell,

unless I associated her with the part she played. She was persecuted in the drama, and she suffered so sweetly that I had her troubles, I suppose, in my mind."

"She was only acting, lad; they are always at it. My mother was one of the loveliest women in the world; a voice so soft that you would have thought her an angel. But there, what the devil am I talking about? Go on, partner. Don't mind me; it doesn't matter. I can bear it; I've been in training long enough. Talk about the patience of Job! But there, keep it up, partner!"

George was drinking hard by this time, but he still watched me with a steady attention.

"I went to the theatre the next night."

"Of course you did; just the thing you would do," said George.

"And the following night. Then my press friend took me to a tavern after the play and introduced me to one of the actors, who said I had better be careful; the young lady was a modest, good girl, respected by the company, though she had a wretch of a father. The man came in while we were talking, and I was introduced to him; a tall, thin, middle-aged man, showily dressed, with fine manners, and several rings on both hands. Fitzherbert Willoughby they called him. He did not impress me favourably, but I made myself as agreeable to him as I could. I paid for his supper, and also for hot brandy-and-water afterwards. He talked to me about my family, professed to know my elder brothers, and hoped for the pleasure of meeting me again. He generally, he said, came into the Crown Tavern after the Adelphi, after seeing his little girl home. My heart beat quickly when he referred to Miss Willoughby, and I said I usually looked in at the Crown in an evening, though, to speak the truth, that was the first time I had ever been in the place."

"The moment a fellow is in love, as he calls it, he becomes a liar," said George; "but that's human nature, I suppose; go on, partner."

"We met at the Crown several times before I ventured to tell Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby how much I admired his daughter. He was not in the least offended; he praised her and said she was his only solace since his wife's death. They had once, he said, been in flourishing circumstances, and had spent several years in foreign travel. His wife had died abroad. Margaret was fond of artistic life, and wished to go on the stage. He supposed she sought in that occasional forgetfulness of her mother, to whom she was devoted. Encouraged by the kindly and free way in which he talked of her, I said how much I should like to have the pleasure of meeting her. He invited me to come home and sup some night after the theatre. She generally had something alone, he said; but as I had honoured them by taking an interest in her career, we would go home together

one night and have supper at his chambers. The night came at last."

"It always does," said George; "everything you wait for comes sooner or later."

"She was more beautiful off the stage than on. But she was not much more cheerful. Somehow I found myself pitying her at home just as much as I did in the play. Her smile was sweet, but it was melancholy. She did not speak of the stage as if she liked it. They lived in a suite of rooms in Buckingham-street, Strand. The supper was well served and almost luxurious, and she presided over it like a queen in disguise. It occurred to me afterwards that she was also like a queen in captivity; she seemed resigned, and as if she was acting the part of content. After supper we had 'a hand at cards.' Nothing was so soothing at night, Mr. Willoughby said, as a quiet game at cards. He suggested by-and-by that it was time for Margaret to retire. When I went home I found that I had lost thirty shillings. I called the next day formally, and left cards on father and daughter. I was madly in love. In less than a week after first speaking to her I found an opportunity to see her alone. She seemed glad I had called, and not sorry her father was out. It was not my vanity that led me to think so. Love has keen eyes. In my case it was bold, too. I confessed how devotedly I loved her, and asked her permission to propose for her to her father. I told her who I was, and said my mother should call upon her. She made no reply, but she let her hand lie quietly in mine, and when I asked for her answer there were tears in her eyes, and I kissed her. And so we were engaged, but she asked me not to tell her father. That troubled me. I could do nothing but wonder at it. I had no secrets from my mother. I told her all. She was dead against it, and refused to call at Buckingham-street. But she went with me to the theatre, and I persuaded her, you may be sure, to go a step further. She called on Miss Willoughby, and then I suppose my friend of the tavern began to discover that I was serious in my admiration of his daughter. I learnt afterwards that he went round and made inquiries into my financial condition and prospects. One day he met me as I was going home from the City. He invited me to have a few minutes' chat, and took me into an obscure bar. There in a fierce whisper he asked me what I meant in regard to his daughter. I said I should like his permission to marry her when I could afford to set up housekeeping. He said I had his permission to go and hang myself. He knew the sort of loafer I was—one of those needy swells who married actresses and lived upon their earnings. I told him that if he was not her father I would make him apologise on his knees. He said if I dared to enter his rooms again

he would horsewhip me for a cur who tried to win my way to free living at the hands of an *artiste* by fawning upon her father."

"And you didn't shoot him?" exclaimed George.

"We don't carry pistols in London, and he was her father. At least, I thought so then. But it turned out otherwise."

"Not her father!" said George, pushing the bottle aside, and passing his hand over his eyes. "Did he ever call the girl Maggie?"

"No; always Margaret. He made a point of that, except when he called her Miss Willoughby."

"She was christened Margaret," George continued, speaking to himself, "and his name begins with a W. It's always been in my mind that I should come on him by an accident."

"What do you say?" I asked.

"O, nothing, partner—my old complaint, dreaming! I'm a bit superstitious. From the first minute I saw you I felt that you and me could be useful to each other, and it's that notion that sets my thoughts in queer tracks; but don't mind me, partner, it doesn't matter—go on. Tall, I think you said he was, and very polite, showy, and sandy hair—a sort of grand style, and a kind of smile that the devil might put on at sight of a pet victim frizzling. Damn him! I'll make him smile yet!"

George struck his fist upon the rude table by which he was sitting, and then strode angrily about the room.

"Do you know him?"

"I hope so," he said. "And yet it's absurd to think it. Go on, lad, your story touches me strangely. I knew it would!"

"But you have left off drinking," I said, "and your pipe is out."

"I'll drink and smoke when you've finished," he said quickly. "Did this young lady ever speak of her mother?"

"No, only once that I remember, and then she did so in a constrained manner; on account of her being dead, I suppose."

"Or of any other relation?"

"She said she had no relation in the world; she believed she had a brother who died when she was a child."

"But her mother—what did she say about her?"

"Nothing at that time; it was afterwards that she told me about her, just before we parted in London. But you are confusing me; I'll soon finish if you will not ask me any more questions."

"Go on where you had that row with him, you know. I won't put you out any more."

"I found it difficult to meet her after that, but my press friend managed it. He brought her to Doughty-street. My mother fell in love with her. That was a great comfort to me. I had a scheme

for making a fortune. A young fellow in our office had gone to America. He there gave up the business he went out about and joined some men who were going to the gold-diggings. He wrote and invited me to come out. One day I had a letter from him saying he would help me with money and advice; he was part owner of a profitable claim, and hoped to bring home twenty thousand pounds. I made a proposition to Margaret and to my mother. I would go out, I said, and if they would give me two years I would come back and marry. Margaret gave me at once her pledge to wait, and also if anything happened which should give her the need of a home she would accept the shelter of my mother's house. But she said I must have her father's consent. She knew how he had insulted me. Nevertheless I must put up with that for her sake. She had her reasons. We were alone when she said this—alone in the little dining-room at Doughty-street. I shall never forget that pleasant time. It seemed like a dream with a strange romance in it. We sat together. Her hand rested in mine, and we talked of the days when I should come home and she would be compelled to act no more, but would live a quiet, peaceful life."

"But her father, this Willoughby, said she liked acting," interrupted George.

"That wasn't true; he forced her upon the stage; he made that a means of courting the patronage and society of a certain class of fifth-rate noblemen; he received her salary, and lived by his wits; he accepted questionable invitations for her; and she promised that, if necessary, she would leave him, declare he was not her father, and seek my mother's protection. But somehow he exercised a peculiar fascination over her, and she was only brave when he was not present."

"And you left her for two years!" exclaimed my partner, "and with a wolf like that?"

"It was only at the last moment that I learnt all; when my trunks were packed; when my passage was taken; and it seemed as if there was nothing else to be done. I think she told me all at last to nerve my arm and make it strong."

"She would know best, bless her heart!" said George; "no doubt she would, but I wouldn't have left her if I'd been you."

"Don't say that, friend; I would have only been too glad of an excuse to stay by her side."

"What did she say at last, then, about her mother?"

"I went to her father, and in spite of his rudeness I told him I had a prospect of wealth; that I was going abroad for two years; and that I wanted his permission to correspond with his daughter with a view to marriage at the end of that time, should my financial

position be satisfactory to him. He gave his consent, but held himself free to dispose of her hand in the meantime if an opportunity offered, or to do whatever he pleased."

"And yet you left her! By Jupiter, partner, that brazen-face at the Bar was right! You left that poor lamb in the grip of a vulture! But go on, don't mind me! I may be wrong; I dare say I am. But somehow you are letting daylight into a life that has been dark, into a search that has been a groping business. I think it must be true!"

"True, George, as gospel!"

"What I'm thinking of? True! By thunder, I begin to think it is! It must be, if a waiting game is a winning one, and I'm sure it is, only wait long enough. Well, partner, why the devil don't you go on with your yarn? Don't you see I'm anxious for my liquor?"

"Then I'll come to the end straight. The day we parted she said—shall I tell you every word? We were standing in the room where I first saw her. He had consented to our leave-taking.—'You have no reason to fear I shall not be true and faithful, no matter what he says. For my sake you have humbled yourself to him, and I am glad you did it, for I may now sometimes mention your name. Moreover, if you come back rich he will keep to his bargain; if you come back poorer than you are now that will make no difference to my plighted troth, always supposing, dear, that you continue in the same mind.' I could only say 'My darling' still, for my heart was too full. 'And don't be afraid,' she continued, 'that he will coerce me to do anything you might object to; he is not my father, and if it becomes necessary I will leave him and declare it. When my mother died she told me that her husband and my father died when I was very young, and should he (referring to Mr. Willoughby) ever ill-treat me she bade me use that information and obtain my freedom, but not without; and then she tried to tell me more, but her strength failed her and she never spoke afterwards. So you see,' said my poor little sweetheart, 'I am an orphan, and a nameless one; I really don't know who I am!"

"God help her, no!" exclaimed George, his eyes fixed on me. "But I do!"

"You!"

"My sister Meg!" he said in slow, measured accents; "my little sister Meg!"

(To be continued.)

En Passant.

MADAME PATTI, who has left London for North Wales, where, as we stated some weeks ago, she has taken a cottage for the summer months, is seeking a decree of nullity of marriage on the ground that the ceremony was informal. The register describes the Marquis as of the parish of Sainte-Clotilde, in Paris, and Mdlle. Patti as of the parish of Saint-Phillippe du Roule, and states that the ceremony was performed by Mr. William Plunkett, curé of Clapham, in the presence of the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, Mr. Henry Muir, and Sir Michael Costa. Madame Patti's advocate alleges that, by the French law, the parties must be actually domiciled in the parish; that the curé of Clapham had no jurisdiction, and therefore that the ceremony is null and void. To those unacquainted with the technicalities of French law, it would appear a matter of indifference whether the bonds of matrimony are to be broken by the Marquis de Caux or by Madame Patti. But the reason of the fight is plain when it is considered that, if the Marquis gain the day, a mere decree of "separation of body and goods" will be pronounced, the Marquis taking half Madame Patti's fortune.

LE Roi s'amuse. The theatrical season at Simla commenced on the 7th June with the late Lord Lytton's comedy, *Walpole; or, Every Man has his Price.* The author's son, the Viceroy, had suggested that the piece should be played, and was present at the performance. How, as an Indian journalist remarks, his Excellency must have chuckled when he first proposed the performance of the play, and what intense satisfaction he must have felt as he looked around at the laughing audience and settled in his mind how many men were there whose gratitude he or any other Viceroy could command in proportion to the amount of favours he was able to bestow upon them? From the peculiar constitution of its society, there is probably no country in the world to which Sir Robert Walpole's epigram could be more appropriately applied than India. Patriotism there is no virtue; it is about the last quality which an official requires to assist him in carrying out his ordinary duties. Subserviency, however, is a gift which every man who wants to get on must cultivate assiduously. Like Sir Pertinax, he must make his way with a smile on his face and his hat in his hand.

SIGNOR SALVINI, in answer to a man who urged him to accept some new plays, recently wrote :—"My conscience does not permit me to propose a composition to our company which, if confided even to expert actors, would not obtain from the public the desired suffrages. The artists themselves would be dissatisfied with the work; they would not act it with

love and conscience; therefore it would be sure to fail. My duty as a man obliges me to use words that sound hard, but I prefer them to lying adulation. As I am not able to grant your request, I return the two books you have left. I have not had the courage even to open them. I am sure they could not change my opinion. Do not be discouraged. On the contrary, take fresh courage in this difficult arena, remembering that the greatest writers have also suffered these thorns, which will change into roses for you, undoubtedly, when you have succeeded in making dramatic compositions out of your writings."

The will of the late Mr. Charles Mathews has just been proved. The personal estate is sworn under £20,000. Everything goes to his wife During his voyage to India, in 1875, Mr. Mathews came into possession of a permanent income in an unusual manner. One of the passengers was so impressed with the charms of the actor's conversation, that just before the steamer arrived at Calcutta he said: "Mr. Mathews, you are the most delightful companion I have ever had. I am rich, and have no reason to love my relatives. Permit me to settle £600 a year upon you, to be continued to Mrs. Mathews if she should survive you." Mr. Mathews accepted the offer, not because he stood in need of the money, but from a little harmless vanity. Certainly his social qualities had never met with a more substantial recognition.

During Mr. Mathews' last visit to America, a dinner was given in his honour at the Manhattan Club, where he and Mr. John Brougham, and John Gilbert, and a host of notabilities behaved like the winds in one of Mr. Dickens' novels—that is, made a night of it. Mr. Brougham collected a museum of post-prandial witticisms for the occasion, wove them together in a *ventum textilem*, and waggishly intimated that the M. C. on the table service was in honour of the guest. Being a little confused as to left and right, Mathews read the monogram Hebrew fashion, and accepted the compliment as a specially delicate one, intended to perpetuate the fact that he had once dined at the club!

Mr. Mathews' courtship of his second wife—who, it may be remembered, had obtained a divorce from her first husband, "Dolly" Davenport—was so short that he acquired the reputation of being a little impulsive in his affairs of the heart. There was a story current at the time, but having no better authority than the *Herald* of that day, that Mr. Davenport publicly affronted Mr. Mathews, in consideration of being relieved of the support of Lizzie Weston. The comedian was passionately devoted to her; treated her, says one who knew them well, with a curious mixture of affection, gallantry, and reverence, and was in return coddled and dosed with medicines when he had a cold, to his heart's content. His marriage with Mrs. Davenport had something of the air of an escapade, but unlike most escapades it turned out happily for both parties.

The effects of the late Mr. Mathews were sold by auction last week. Amongst the articles which have been under the hammer are a

number of choice and decorative effects, including a bust of Charles Mathews the elder, by Joseph, 1822. One sale consisted chiefly of water-colour drawings, portraits, &c. Amongst these was a portrait of Charles Mathews when four years old, by De Wilde; Madame Vestris, in *Grist of the Mill;* a portrait of Charles Mathews as George Rattleton, in *The Hump-backed Lover*, the part in which he made his débût at the Olympic in 1835. There were also a great number of sketches by Nicolle Charles Mathews, Crowquill, Landseer, Theodore Hook, &c. A unique collection of 118 finished water-colour drawings, portraits of Charles Mathews in the several characters in which he at various times appeared realised 125 guineas. A scrap-book containing a number of sketches by well-known artists realised 17 guineas, and another was knocked down for 14 guineas. There was a good company present on each day, and the prices realised were generally high.

"I WAS standing," remarks a San Francisco journalist, "at the California Theatre box-office one night, when a little old-fashioned, farmer-looking-like man, with a gentle face and bright eyes, came up and said in a clear, penetrating voice: 'Can you tell me where the stage entrance of this theatre is?' 'The last door up of the building,' he was told. 'Thank ye,' said the little gentleman, walking briskly away. 'Do you know who that is?' I was asked. 'No,' I replied, 'but from his plainness of dress and quiet, subdued manner, I should fancy him an actor in search of an engagement.' 'He is an actor, but he has an engagement. That's Jefferson.'"

MISS FANNY DAVENPORT is now in Paris, but will soon return to New York. She has bought the right of playing *Olivia* in the United States for £600. Miss Davenport is rather bitter as to the manner in which she has been treated in London. She contrasts the hospitable reception English artists receive in America with the cold reception awarded to her. Having, she says, agreed to pay $3,000 for the piece, she thought she would see how it was played in London. Arrived in Liverpool, she wrote to Mr. Hare acquainting him with her approaching visit to the Court Theatre. Mr. Hare wrote back a brief letter, saying that business prevented him according her an interview, and referring her to the author of the play. Mr. Wills interviewed the lady, pocketed his money, and subsequently sent her a couple of stalls with a request for the cost!

SOME months ago, it may be remembered, Mr. Charles Reade published his adaptation of Mr. Tennyson's *Dora*, produced at the Adelphi Theatre eleven years ago without success. He ascribed its failure to the manner in which it was put upon the stage, and urged that it should be reheard under fair conditions. This appeal has at length been responded to; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kelly will produce the piece during their forthcoming provincial tour. The part of the heroine was originally played by Miss Kate Terry.

"IT is well to note," Mr. Moy Thomas writes to a contemporary, 'that the question of Macklin's age scarcely admits of any doubt. From

the tablet in St. Paul's, Covent-garden, it would appear that he died in his 108th year ; but, strange as it may seem, inscriptions of this kind, which are made generally some time after the death, cannot be implicitly relied on, as could be shown from more than one example. The plate on Macklin's coffin was surely a better evidence ; and on this, as was discovered when the vault was finally closed some twenty years since, it was distinctly recorded that Charles Macklin, comedian, 'died 11th July, 1797, aged 97 years.' "

Mr. Chute, the manager of the Bristol Theatre, died on the 23rd ult., surviving his wife—a sister of Mr. Macready—only four months. Formerly he was an actor, and Falstaff was among the characters in which he appeared to particular advantage. Many actors and actresses who have established a high reputation played in early life under his management—Miss Kate Terry, Miss Ellen Terry, Mrs. Kendal, Mrs. Bancroft, Miss Hodson, Mr. Vernon, and Mr. Arthur Stirling. It is no mere form of expression to say that in private life Mr. Chute was much respected.

Mr. Swinburne, it is understood, is writing an essay upon *Edward II.*, the authorship of which he will endeavour to establish beyond the reach of controversy. The play is generally ascribed to Marlowe. It was "acted by the Earl of Pembroke's servants," and was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company in 1593, and was printed three times between 1598 and 1622. The action comprises the fall of Mortimer, the life and death of Piers Gaveston, and the horrible death of the king. The scene lies partly in England, partly in France. The author, whoever he was, adhered pretty closely to history. Another tragedy on the same subject, by "Theophilus Mac, of No Temple," was published in 1809, but has never been played.

The few actors who have the talent as well as the desire to represent character rather than themselves will not find much encouragement in the fact that Mr. Sothern's recent failure to make the *Crushed Tragedian* popular was due to his marvellous success in totally obliterating his own identity ; neither in dress, manner, nor even in voice, could the audience at once recognise the popular actor of the Haymarket Theatre. During the brief career of the piece, Mr. Sothern received many letters wherein the writers express a hope that he "may soon appear in some more congenial part—one of those well-dressed, gentlemanly characters in which he has no rival," &c., &c. And at the same time "hoping that he will recover his voice, which seemed to have deteriorated so much since his departure from England," &c., &c. Mr. Sothern had simply assumed another tone.

The Rev. Mr. Littlewood, vicar of St. James's, Bath, has, in consequence of the production in that city of the *Pink Dominoes*, made a furious attack upon plays and players in general. "By attending theatrical performances," he says, "a man does not promote the eternal welfare of his brethren, nor glorify God." Nor would a man do so any more

by going through a picture-gallery or reading a fashionable novel, but the act would hardly be open to objection. In support of his denunciation of the stage, Mr. Littlewood said that the subsidised theatres in Paris, where better pieces were played, had but few patrons. This is a fair specimen of the happy ignorance of and indifference to facts which mark such denunciations. By the way, has Mr. Littlewood gone so little in the world as to be unaware that his remarks were the best advertisement an objectionable play could receive?

Mr. Pillans, a favourite Scotch comedian in Edinburgh, died on the 10th ult., at the early age of thirty-four. Mr. Pillans began his career as a call-boy in the Theatre Royal under Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham, and gradually rose from taking part in minor pieces until he latterly appeared with well-merited approbation as the representative in *Rob Roy* of Bailie Nicol Jarvie, as the Laird of Dumbiedykes in *Jeanie Deans*, and similar characters. For nine successive years he was one of the leading characters in the Theatre Royal pantomimes, and he also appeared at the Edinburgh Theatre under Mr. Wybert Reeve. About two years ago he went to Australia, and recently returned to this country far from being benefited by the change.

Mr. John Payne Collier, who is now in his ninetieth year, is at work upon a new edition of his *Annals of the Stage*. His brain, he says, is equal to the task, though his hands may not be. The early life of the veteran scholar presents at least one feature of interest. Descended from Jeremy Collier, who wrote the *View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, and the son of an author of several religious works, Mr. Collier became in his twentieth year one of the parliamentary reporters of *The Times*, with which journal his father had been connected in a similar capacity. In 1819 Mr. Canning complained that a speech delivered by Mr. Hume had been grievously misrepresented in *The Times*. The printer, on being interrogated, said he had received the report from Mr. Collier, who was thereupon called in and examined. Mr. Wynn, in the absence of Canning, pressed for the committal of the offender to Newgate, but the House contented itself with giving him into the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. He was discharged on his petition two days afterwards, "with a reprimand from the Speaker, and on payment of his fees." In those good old times, when the requisite accommodation was deliberately denied to the reporters, it is a matter of surprise that a speech came to be reported at all.

Fire broke out on the 16th ult. at the Prince's Theatre, Bradford, and in a short time the building was completely gutted and totally destroyed. The theatre was erected about two years since by a limited company, at a cost of £26,000, and has since been in the lesseeship of Mr. W. Morgan.

The thirty-third anniversary festival of the Royal General Theatrical Fund, held on the 2nd ult. at the Freemasons' Tavern, was entirely

successful. Mr. Toole was in the chair, and the company included Sir Charles Mills, Sir Andrew Lusk, Sir Bruce Seton, Sir George Eliot, Mr. Irving, Mr. Sothern, Mr. Hollingshead, Mr. Yates, Dr. Russell, Mr. Blanchard, the Rev. W. Rogers, M.A., Mr. David James, the Rev. Dr. Scott, Mr. Terry, and Mr. Frank Marshall. Mr. Irving and Mr. Sothern were compelled by their engagements to leave early. Mr. Toole's speeches were extremely effective in both matter and manner.

Mr. Charles Wyndham has gone to Switzerland. The precise scene of his inevitable "accident," we believe, has not yet been fixed.

Mr. Jervis McEntee has recently painted a series of portraits of Mr. Edwin Booth in his principal dramatic characters.

Mr. H——t, whose hair is very gray, lately thought fit to "chaff" Mr. A——r as to his baldness. "You see," was the quiet reply, "that my hair, unlike yours, preferred death to dishonour."

Bret Harte, who is now in Germany, declares that he will not mix in society until he has written a successful play. Chorus of American friends: "Good-bye, sweet Harte, good-bye!"

Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt, whose success at the Théâtre Français continues without abatement, has two busts in the *Salon*, one of Emile de Girardin, the other of M. William Busnach. The fidelity with which she has represented the careworn and intellectual expression in the face of the veteran journalist is sufficient to prove that she is a truly great sculptor, and her head of the vaudeville writer is not unworthy of the reputation she has won in this branch of art.

M. Octave Gastineau, the dramatist, died last week at the Corps Législatif, where he resided in his quality of Secrétaire-Rédacteur of the Chamber of Deputies. He was the author of *Les Souliers de Bal* and *Perfide comme l'Onde*, and, in conjunction with M. Clairville, *Ernest* and *Le Wagon des Dames*. He shared with M. Bassiact the credit of writing *Mon Mari est à Versailles*, and was to have taken part in the work of adapting M. Zola's *Assommoir* to the stage. He was buried at Sainte-Clotilde.

M. Hervé, as recently stated, will play Jupiter in the revival at the Gaîté of *Orphée aux Enfers*. Probably this is the first time a composer will play in a piece by a rival. M. Offenbach is quite touched. "If ever Milhar should take *Le Petit Faust* out of his répertoire," he said the other day to M. Hervé, "I must play Valentin."

M. Eugène Labiche has published his plays in a collected form, intimating that he does not intend to write any more. Recently, in a conversation with M. Jules Clarétie, he frankly stated why he had come to this determination. "I must put down the pen," he said, "before my powers are impaired. I have never forgotten an incident which occurred during the time that Offenbach was at the Bouffes. I was talking to him in his room there, when a boy appeared with a card. 'What!' exclaimed

Offenbach: 'again? Tell him I am not here.' The boy gone, Offenbach turned to me and said: 'It was Scribe, who wants me to set music to and bring out his old comedy, *La Chatte Métamorphosée en Femme.*'" Scribe! M. Labiche may well be pardoned for resolving not to risk a similar humiliation.

THE Fürst Theater, the only theatre now open in Vienna, announced last week for production a bluette entitled, *Der Schah von Persien in Wien* (The Shah in Vienna). The authorities refused to allow a title to be used which they considered disrespectful to their Eastern visitor, and the piece is to be called instead, *Die Perser in Wien* (The Persians in Vienna).

A GERMAN version of M. Sardou's *Bourgeois de Pontarcy* is promised for the autumn season at the Carl Theater, in Vienna. Herr Wiene, late of the Burgtheater, and who has just been starring at Berlin in M. Belot's *Article* 47, has been engaged to play the leading part, created by Paul Berton at the Paris Vaudeville.

THEATRICAL business at Pompeii, which has been at a standstill since the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D., appears to be looking up, judging from the following announcement of Signor Luigni: "After a lapse of more than eighteen hundred years, the theatre of this city will be reopened with *La Figlia del Reggimento.* I solicit a continuance of the favour bestowed on my predecessor, Marcus Quintus Martius, and beg to assure the public that I shall make every effort to equal the rare qualities displayed during his management."

MR. BARNUM has sent ten guineas to Miss Field for the Shakspere Memorial Fund. "When," he says, "I first visited Stratford, in 1844, in company with my friend Albert Smith, I firmly resolved to secure Shakspere's house and place it in my New York Museum. But my project got wind, and the old house, so long neglected, at once received care and attention. It is, of course, better that it should be where it is."

THE *American Art Journal* says that $445 was spent in one month by the Pappenheim-Adams Opera Company in bribing New York critics. Two of those critics occupy positions upon leading daily journals, and rumour speaks of their early removal.

THERE is a story current of Mr. Jefferson's last visit to San Francisco, which may or may not be true, but which illustrates clearly how close the connection is between him and the character with which his name is associated. He entered the Bank of California on some business, but was not recognised by the teller, who required him to be "identified." "Do you not know me?" said Mr. Jefferson. "No, sir, I do not." "If my dog Schneider vas here he would know me," said Rip, and the identification was complete.

HERE is an "out West" story which will amuse the frequenters of Gilmore's Garden. The agent of Mr. Thomas went to a small city in Michigan to make arrangements for a concert. He went to the

editor of the only morning paper in the place, and, after an eloquent description of Thomas, his orchestra, and the beautiful classical music they performed, he asked the editor what he thought the prospect for business would be. "Well," replied the editor, "the success of this Thomas troupe depends entirely upon the sort of end men you have got. If you have two durned good end men you'll do well; but if you ain't got good end men our people won't patronise the show."

This is Trinculo's version of a speech delivered by Mr. John T. Raymond at a dinner given him by the New York Lotus Club: "How such a dinner as this would gladden our American cousin abroad, and our dear friend George Fawcett Rowe! I have travelled all over this Continent; I have seen every desert between New York and the Pacific, but I never saw such a dessert as this." (Here the speaker was overcome with emotion.) "I have looked into every gorge of the Rocky Mountain chain, but I never, never saw a gorge equal to——." (Here the speaker broke down again, and the whole company was visibly affected.)

This time the laugh is not on Mark Twain's side. Dr. Riggs, a dentist of Hartford, is the first who administered laughing-gas when the discovery of that anæsthetic was made by the late Dr. Horace Wells. Several weeks ago the Rev. Joseph H. Twitchell, pastor of the Asylum Hill Congregational Church in that city, sat nearly two days in Dr. Riggs' dental chair having his teeth repaired. Dr. Riggs is chatty, and while at work gave Mr. Twitchell a detailed and interesting account of Dr. Wells' discovery. There were so many rare and funny things in the narrative that Mr. Twitchell repeated them from memory to Mark Twain, who thought it would be well to see Dr. Riggs himself, and work them up with some embellishments for publication. A few days afterwards, the distinguished humorist himself appeared in Dr. Riggs's office, saying that, "as he was going abroad he would like to have his teeth overhauled somewhat, though he really had no idea that very much tinkering would be necessary." After being well seated in the operating chair he succeeded in getting the doctor started, and between the story and the work performed, two days were occupied. Mark rejoiced over his good luck, and took the earliest opportunity to inform his clerical friend that he had succeeded in getting just what he wanted. The day before he sailed for Europe he received a bill from Dr. Riggs for $200. He has not since been seen to smile.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

ON the 11th ult., at the Royal Italian Opera, Madame Patti appeared, for the first time in England, in the title character of Rossini's *Semiramide*. The emotions she had to depict here are not such as excite genuine sympathy in the breast of an audience. There is an artificiality in all Semiramide does, and this is rendered additionally conspicuous by the roulades and cadenzas which Rossini has introduced in scenes where they are unsuitable to the spirit and intention of the dramatic action. Madame Patti gave a signal proof of her genius by imbuing the conventional *fiorituri* with a sentiment and a pathos which almost lifted them into the category of true dramatic music; and her acting was not only dignified, graceful, and impassioned, but was replete with expression and subtle colouring, especially in her by-play and facial expression when listening to the utterances of others. For the present we refrain from saying more respecting Madame Patti's acting, which in another page is specially considered by Mr. Hersee. That she sang the florid music with perfect ease, and at the same time with unrivalled brilliancy, it is scarcely necessary to say. The part was on this occasion enhanced in difficulty by the elaborate variations with which Madame Patti embellished the aria "Bel Raggio." In writing these difficult embellishments Rossini evidently intended to tax her executive powers to the fullest extent, but even Rossini was unable to overtask the vocal skill of this incomparable vocalist.

Early in the month *Vanderdecken* gave place at the Lyceum to the *Bells* and a new version by Mr. Albery of *Pickwick*, with Mr. Irving as Mathias and Jingle. It is unnecessary at this time of day to speak of Mr. Irving's acting in the former piece; enough to say that it was at least as powerful and impressive as ever. The present version of *Pickwick* is a rearrangement of that which Mr. Albery prepared for the same theatre in 1871. It consists of six tableaux, and is exclusively devoted to the eventful career of Mr. Alfred Jingle and incidents bearing upon it. Mr. Albery handles the original with a freedom which almost takes away one's breath, and a scene interpolated in the previous version, representing Jingle and Trotter working on the feelings of Mr. Pickwick, is not injudiciously retained. Mr. Irving's Jingle will go with his Jeremy Diddler to prove that in the region of farce or farcical comedy he finds a congenial element. The performance is diverting in a very high degree, though partaking no more of the spirit of caricature than the *Pickwick Papers* themselves. It abounds in pointedly-delivered lines, in expressive by-play, and in touches of

the dry humour which Mr. Irving has displayed to such excellent effect in other characters. Dickens's Jingle seems to have stepped from the book on to the stage, whether as regards his astounding *aplomb* in all circumstances, the ingenuity with which he fills his pockets and wriggles out of awkward positions, and, lastly, his penitence for the numerous transgressions of which he has been guilty. In the closing scene, representing the Fleet Prison, Mr. Irving showed some genuine pathos, and were it prolonged for a few minutes an appreciable impression might be created. To dispose an audience to seriousness after making it laugh throughout five scenes is in itself a noteworthy feat—a feat, however, for which we had been fully prepared by the effect of his Louis XI. Much enthusiasm was displayed at Mr. Irving's benefit; bouquets were rained upon him, and a short speech he made at the close was frequently interrupted by applause and even friendly assurances from different parts of the house.

At Her Majesty's Opera, on the 6th ult., a large audience assembled to witness the revival of Balfe's latest opera, *The Knight of the Leopard*, Italianised as *Il Talismano*. It is much to be regretted that the opera was not in the first instance produced in its original English shape. Balfe wrote his music to an English libretto, the work of Mr. Arthur Matthison; and the musical treatment of the subject—suggested by the English words—appears in some instances unsuitable to the Italian translation written by Signor Zaffira. Had Balfe composed an opera to the latter libretto, he would probably have given us a totally different work from *Il Talismano*. The very title of the Italian version is misleading and inappropriate. The story of the opera is taken from Scott's novel, *The Talisman*, but it deals with the adventures of Sir Kenneth of Scotland, the "Knight of the Leopard," and no "talisman" is introduced, or even alluded to, throughout the opera. It is sad to see a well-written English libretto superseded by an inferior Italian production. The opera contains a mixture of musical styles, and it is evident that Balfe thought the time had come when he might try his hand at grand opera. His powers were not equal to his ambition, and those portions of the opera in which he emulates the grandiose style of Meyerbeer and the peculiarities of Wagner are the least successful. The most agreeable features in the work are the flowing melodies which bear the stamp of his own individuality. If none of them is strikingly original they are all acceptable, and afford favourable opportunities to vocalists. Madame Gerster was successful in the rôle of Edith Plantagenet, although she could not efface the recollection of the "creator" of the character, Madame Nilsson. Her solo singing was in almost all respects admirable, especially in her delivery of the pathetic legend of the Lady Eveline. It would be better for Madame Gerster's reputation, however, if she would confine herself to the *tours de force* which are within her powers, and refrain from attempting fresh vocal feats until she has by private practice acquired the power of executing them with certainty. Mdlle. Salla was an attractive Berengaria, but was unfortunately not content with the opportunities afforded by the second rôle, and spoiled the quaint romance

"La Guerra appena terminata," by introducing a bravura finish quite out of character with the simplicity of the song. Signor Galassi was admirable in the rôle of Richard Cœur de Lion.

One of the novelties promised in the prospectus of the season at the Royal Italian Opera was produced on the 9th ult. The opera was Herr von Flotow's *Alma*, originally produced at the Italiens, Paris, on the 9th of April last. The hero of the story is the Portuguese poet Camoëns, and the plot is founded on some adventures in his romantic career. While at Goa Camoëns purchased a male slave, who accompanied him to Lisbon, and helped to maintain the poet by performing in the public streets. In the opera the man-servant becomes the Bayadère, Alma, whom Camoëns purchases in order to save her from outrage. King Sebastian was a mere boy when he first made the acquaintance of Camoëns, but in the opera King Sebastian is made a stalwart monarch as old as Camoëns himself. These changes have been made without securing strength of dramatic interest, and Camoëns, who should obviously be the chief personage in the drama, is made comparatively insignificant in order that Alma may be exalted. The plot is so feeble that it is not worth recital. Nothing but music of surpassing excellence could save such an opera from failure, and Herr von Flotow's music is not of surpassing excellence. In the entire work there is not a melody which one would care to recall, nor is there anything in the orchestration which merits special praise. The lively ballet music of the third act was written by Signor Vianesi, who has successfully sought to impart local colour by the use of Peninsular rhythms, which have been almost completely ignored by Herr von Flotow. Without specifying the music sung by Mdlle. Albani (Alma), Mdlle. Belocca (Zingaretta), M. Capoul (Camoëns), and Signor Cotogni (The King), it will be sufficient to say that these artists have seldom shown greater ability.

Opinions differed very widely as to the merits of Mr. W. S. Gilbert's *Engaged* when that farcical comedy was originally produced. Whilst some were found to relish the curious subacid flavour of the plot, with its inverted motives, its perpetual satire, and its strange combination of prosaic realism and utter absurdity, others were heard to cry out against its heartlessness and needless cynicism. Some, again, who did not complain of the spirit of the play, objected to it simply on the ground of its being dull and full of repetition; they failed to appreciate its humour, and could not imagine why such story as it possessed could not have been told in a couple of acts. On the one hand, we were urged to go to the Haymarket, that we might enjoy the heartiest and longest-sustained laugh that we had had for years; on the other, we were warned that we should leave the theatre probably disgusted, and certainly bored with the entertainment. These differences of opinion would scarcely have existed had the comedy been played then as it is now, for whilst there is nothing in the Strand performance to disguise or attenuate the faults noticeable at the Haymarket, there is much to spoil the pleasure of those who most thoroughly enjoyed the whimsical fun of the play. The spirit—or that which we conceive to have been the spirit—of Mr.

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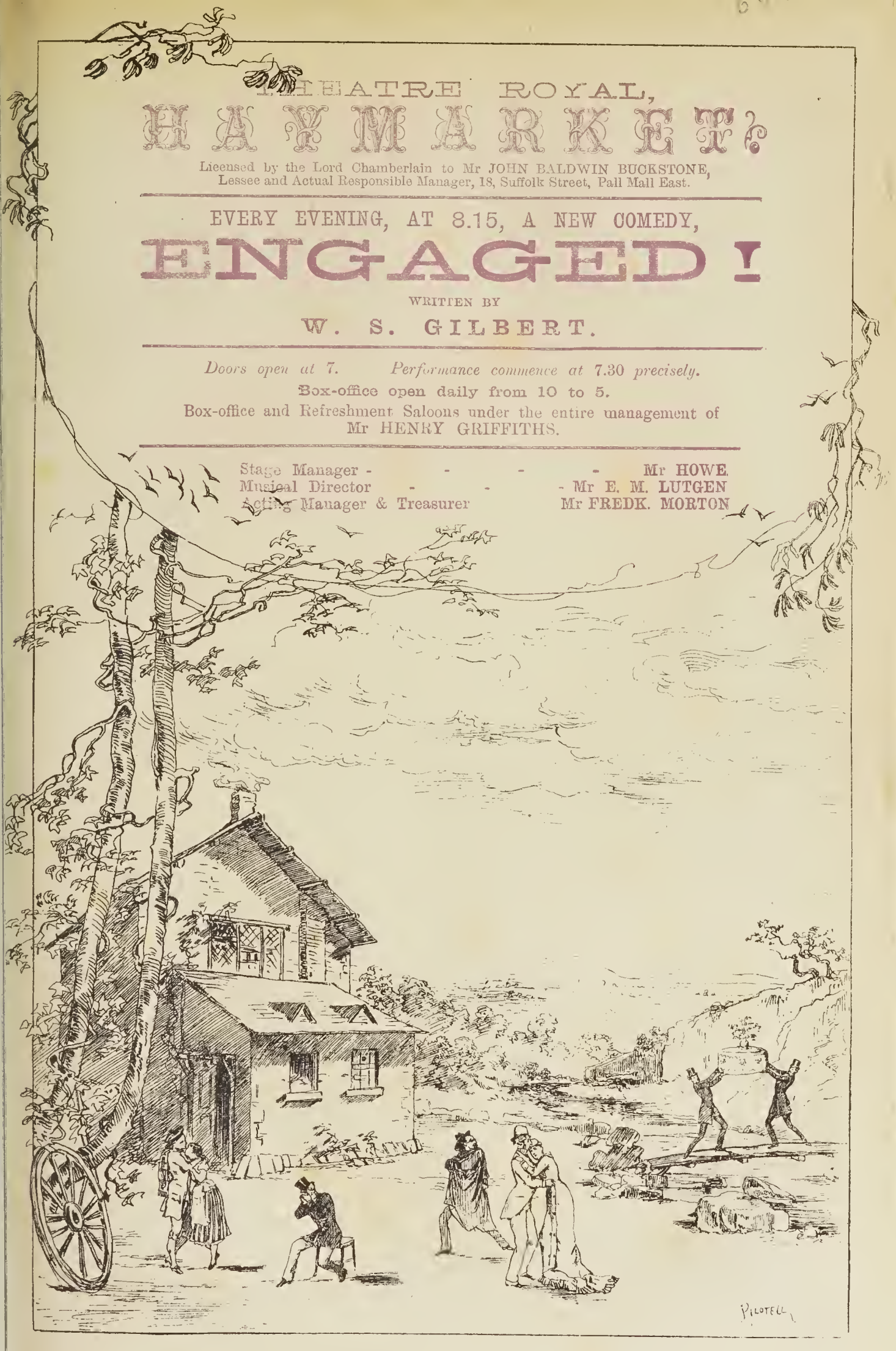

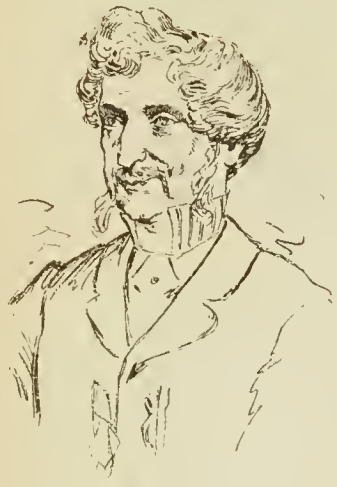

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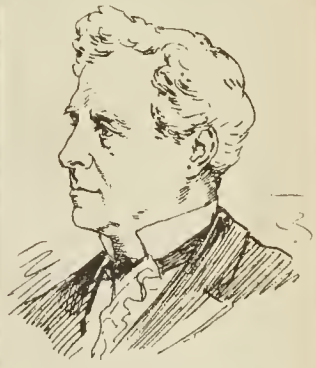
Act I. - ENGAGED.

Act II.—MARRIED OR SINGLE?

Act III.—MARRIED.



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Gilbert's comedy has now been allowed by almost all the members of the cast to evaporate. According to our view of the requirements of the play it is an absolute *sine quâ non* that its interpreters should appear absolutely unconscious of any ludicrous side to their sayings and doings; and even when the singular frankness of the several characters removes them furthest from the possibilities of actual life, the representatives should studiously sustain the tone and manner of the every-day people whose hidden natures are being revealed by this novel process of analysis. The artistic success of the several players who appeared at the Haymarket was in exact proportion to the degree in which they realised this necessity. Of these players, all save Miss Julia Stewart have disappeared from the cast; and so unsatisfactorily are the places of the remainder filled, that Miss Stewart, notwithstanding the comparative smallness of her part, is easily able to throw all her colleagues into the shade. The Cheviot Hill is still Mr. Honey; but Mr. Honey, alas! admirable low comedian though he is, never from the first caught the spirit of the skit, and his lead is now followed by many of his company, to the no small detriment—one might almost say the destruction—of the play. He was disappointing when he played Cheviot Hill before in London, and was apparently doubtful what to do with it; he is more than disappointing now that he has decided to vulgarise it with comic "business," and to ignore its essence altogether.

Early in the month an opportunity was given to Madame Pappenheim to vindicate her claim to the highest rank among contemporary *prime donne drammatice*. She had previously made a very favourable impression in the character of Valentina in *Les Huguenots*, but when it was announced that she would essay the exacting rôle of Leonora in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, it was felt that she ran some risk in attempting a part which demands exceptional vocal and histrionic powers, and is associated with the names of a long list of illustrious artists, commencing with Malibran and concluding with Titiens. The representative of Leonora should possess the emotional power which is demanded in the highest regions of the tragic drama, and should also be endowed with a powerful and sympathetic voice, developed by skilful training. It requires an accomplished actress to do justice to the dramatic side of the character, and the music which Leonora has to sing is so difficult of execution that it is only by rarely-gifted vocalists that it can be acceptably rendered. Madame Pappenheim came successfully through an ordeal of more than ordinary difficulty. Her acting was powerfully impressive without any resort to exaggeration, and her pathos was of that spontaneous and natural kind which commands the sympathies of every spectator. In the scene where Leonora scans the countenances of the prisoners, hoping to find among them the features of her husband, she took no pains to make the audience see what she was doing, but was wholly absorbed in her loving quest. There was no straining after effect, no attitudinising for the sake of the audience. As usual in these rare instances, the audience, of whom the artist apparently took no heed, took great heed of the artist, and she was reminded of their existence by the enthusiastic applause with which her efforts were rewarded. We must confess

that Madame Pappenheim's previous impersonation of Valentina had not led us to expect such an admirable display of histrionic art as that which her Leonora unfolded, and in this respect we see no reason to place her below the level of her greatest predecessors. With the exception of a few high notes, she sang the exacting music with facility of execution and considerable charm of voice.

M. Thomas's *Hamlet* was produced on the 16th ult. for the first and only time this season. The composer ingeniously stipulated with Mr. Gye that the latter should retain the exclusive English right of performing this opera only on condition of his presenting it at Covent Garden every season. For the sake of preserving this exclusive privilege the opera has been for the last three or four years performed once in each season. It has never been attractive in this country, or it would have been more frequently performed; and it is doubtful whether the exclusive right of performing it in England is worth much to any manager. English audiences, familiar with the *ipsissima verba* of Shakspere's grandest tragedy, are shocked when they find passages in which an all-encircling philosophy is clothed in exquisite poetry, turned into feeble jingling rhymes; set to music which is not only devoid of dramatic passion, but is, merely considered as music, weak and ineffective. Probably no French librettist could do justice to such a splendid theme, and certainly M. A. Thomas is unequal to the task of marrying music to the verse of Shakspere. Incapacity may be pardoned, but there can be no excuse for the desecration of Hamlet in the "play scene," which in the opera terminates with a drinking song and chorus (!) for Hamlet and the courtiers. Signor Cotogni, as in duty bound, sang the vulgar ditty in the usual "rollicking" manner, and his excellent singing rendered it almost endurable. But such an interpretation could only result in depriving Hamlet of dignity. Mdlle. Albani, next to the original representative of Ophelia, Madame Christine Nilsson, is the best Ophelia to be found on the lyric stage.

The problems suggested to the mind of the playgoer by such a dramatic exhibition as that now made at the Olympic are many and sad. Why is it, we find ourselves asking, that a manager of Mr. Nevill's known intelligence and love of his art allows his stage to be disgraced by the production of a play which, aiming to interest the lowest class of audience, would, by reason of its utter imbecility, be soundly hissed at the Victoria or the East of London? Why does an actress, who has a reputation in her own country, and an obvious wish to sustain it in ours, choose for her first appearance a rôle which is offensive where it is not ridiculous, and gives her no chance of securing such effects as may be within her range? *Nancy Sikes* is nothing more nor less than a meaningless string of scenes, which provide an uncompromising series of burlesques of the more repulsive episodes of Dickens's novel. From beginning to end we are in company of a set of thieves and victims, of law-breakers and law-administrators, who are like nothing on the face of the earth. Nancy, who has received brevet-rank as Mrs. Sikes, bears

no resemblance to the half-wild, hysterical, loving, hating woman, whose unselfish passion alone raises her above the level to which she is dragged by her sordid life. The fault here is, perhaps, chiefly that of a dramatist who can no more explain a character than he can construct an act; but it must be confessed that Miss Rose Eytinge, the American actress, who makes her début here in the rôle, fails to suggest that she has any qualifications for it save those provided by a certain rough vigour and an occasional touch of hard pathos. From every point of view, it is unfortunate that Miss Eytinge should have asked to be judged by such an effort; and it will be kindest to her to defer all estimate of her ability until she displays it through some happier medium. Mr. Anson labours more successfully as Fagin than do most of his coadjutors in their different tasks, but he fails to hint at the inner vileness of the old thief-maker's nature, and his resemblance to the Jew is at best but superficial.

Those who study the theatrical advertisements in this dullest of dull dramatic seasons may well be excused for having deduced from the name of the latest production at the Olympic that an attempt had been made to revive the custom of dealing upon the stage—of course in the light-hearted spirit of extravaganza—with the political events of the day. To treat such a subject as the recent Congress of Berlin, an event fraught with interest so momentous to the whole of Europe, in a spirit of parody would certainly have been an attempt open to the charges of indiscretion and doubtful taste, and to have succeeded in the attempt would have demanded a vein of peculiar humour tempered by rare judgment. As a matter of fact, *A Congress at Paris* is nothing more nor less than an unpretending extravaganza, interspersed with song and dance, and based upon a plot which has no reference whatever to politics in general or to the Eastern Question in particular. England, France, Germany, and Spain are respectively represented by the four grandparents of the heroine, a young lady named Polly, who has been born at sea, and whose nationality it is attempted to determine by means of a meeting of her relations held in the Chinese house of the Paris Exhibition. Of course the chief fun is sought in the difficulties experienced by English and Spanish grandmothers and French and German grandfathers in making themselves mutually understood for the purpose of their important discussion; and the Babel is but increased by the amiable assistance of a many-tongued waiter, who is under the impression that he is qualified for the post of interpreter by his knowledge of a few scraps of several foreign languages. Another element of confusion is provided in the appearance upon the scene of a detective who fancies that some unlawful purpose must be at the bottom of a gathering which he does not understand. Eventually this minion of the law does more good than harm, and manages to make smooth the road of love for the heroine and her sweetheart, who is none other than the polyglot waiter before mentioned. This trifle is acted in a manner sufficiently sprightly by Miss Lizzie Coote, Miss Cleeve, Mr. Harmond, Mr. Warren, Miss Lavis, Mr. Beerbohm Tree and Mr. Procter. Mr.

Tree, indeed, well known as an exceedingly good amateur actor, once more gives promise of developing into a really effective exponent of eccentric "character" parts.

IN THE PROVINCES.

Before leaving Birmingham, where he fulfilled an engagement at the end of June, Mr. Toole once again displayed his generosity and capability for hard work in an entertainment given at the Town Hall in aid of the funds of the Queen's Hospital. "The task he undertook," says the *Daily Gazette*, "was onerous. What are known as 'readings' are by no means calculated to improve the reputation of popular actors. Without the aid of dress, the glamour of gaslight, the attractiveness of stage surroundings, and the contrast obtained by opposing characters, the comedian has to contend against overwhelming difficulties, and his efforts are apt to create disappointment. All these drawbacks notwithstanding, we were pleased to find that Mr. Toole achieved as great a success as his high position in the profession entitled us to anticipate. His readings were a genuine treat, not by any means from the intrinsic merit of the sketches themselves, but from the charm with which the actor's art invested them. Every one knows what an irresistible something there is about Mr. Toole's enunciation—a richness, a fulness, a smoothness which carries conviction of pleasure with it. His facial expression, too, is, for mobility and marked distinctness, unrivalled."

Miss Wallis commenced on the 1st of July a tour of seaside towns at Southampton. She subsequently appeared at Margate, Brighton, and Scarborough. The London Strand company played *Our Club* at Birmingham from the 1st to the 13th ult,, and at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, from the 15th to the 29th. The *Daily Post*, after commenting favourably upon the merits of the play, says :— "Miss Swanborough has a capital character as Lady Crawford, in which her sweetness, dramatic power, and fine sense of humour are capitally shown. Mr. Vernon, one of our most popular and promising actors, gave a fine personation of the artist actor, Henry Lennard. M. Marius, who won much fame on his former visits here, played Alfonse Dubuisson, with real force, without exaggeration, and refined expression without commonplace." In Manchester critics were equally in favour of the performance. Mdlle. Beatrice, after fulfilling engagements in Aberdeen and Dundee, appeared on the 22nd at Edinburgh, where the merits of her acting in the *Woman of the People* met with warm recognition. "Mdlle. Beatrice," says the *Daily Review*, "sustains her part with the ability of a consummate actress, developing an intensity and strength of pathos which she does not touch even in the repentant Frou-Frou. In some passages the actress electrifies the house by the vivid realism and passionate earnestness of her manner." The *Scotsman* is not less eulogistic.

More than once the critics have felt themselves compelled to administer very strong censure. When, at the beginning of the

month, the *Great Divorce Case* was played at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, the *Guardian* spoke of it as a "wretched and unwholesome farce, void of wit and humour, and with no merit in plot or dialogue to recommend it. It was received," the critic adds, "with distinct signs of disapproval from a very limited audience." Nor did the entertainments offered by Miss Kate Santley, who appeared at Glasgow and Edinburgh, meet with tenderer treatment. "Eight years ago," says a Glasgow paper, "*Orphée* was produced here by a French company, who were fairly competent to give its songs and choruses in the sparkling Offenbachian manner. As now performed, the opera is less of an opera than a merry-going burlesque, spicy, and at times vulgar. The playing of the orchestra was the only artistic feature of the evening." To the same effect was the criticism of the Edinburgh *Scotsman*:—"The performance was a success so far as a crowded house and the liberal bestowal of applause could make it so; but that either the piece itself or the manner in which it was rendered could give pleasure was a fact that said but little for the good taste of the audience. In Miss Santley's hands the character of Marjolaine certainly took on no superfluous refinement."

To turn to entertainments of a less objectionable nature. Fresh from an engagement at Liverpool, Mr. Brough and Mr. Saker revisited Birmingham with a regular company, and on the 15th ult. commenced an engagement with *Retiring*. Here Mr. Brough had, as he always seems to have, a part to suit him. The honest, open, hearty, old stable-flavoured Sam Snaffles is a perfect study, worked out carefully to the smallest details. The entertainment concluded with the *Bashful Man*, with Mr. Saker in the principal part. Miss Maude Brennan had a benefit at Glasgow on the 15th, when she appeared as Leah. There was rather a thin house. The opening piece was *Used-Up*, in which Mr. Coleman sustained the part of Sir Charles Coldstream. "Though, perhaps, lacking the incomparable finish which characterised the representation of this part by the late Charles Mathews, Mr. Coleman's rendering," says the *News*, "was instinct with masterly ease and quiet power. The chief interest centred in the second and principal piece, from the fact that Miss Brennan essayed for the first time in Glasgow a part with which is closely associated the name of Miss Bateman. It was but natural that an actress as yet unfamiliar with the part should have at the opening felt her way cautiously, and hence, perhaps, coldly; but as the play developed, Miss Brennan displayed vigorous warmth and ardour, together with a power of pathos she was scarcely credited with." In *Katharine Howard*, it is said, Miss Brennan was also successful.

Rob Roy was revived at the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, with Mr. Howard in the chief part, Mrs. Howard as Helen Macgregor, and Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden as Francis Osbaldistone. Mr. Drummond, who on this occasion made his first appearance in Edinburgh, gave much satisfaction by his singing. The company migrated towards the end of the month to Glasgow, where they were well received. There was a formidable rival attraction at the time; for Mr. Pitt's company were then playing *False Shame*, "a piece

which, for variety of interest, brightness of dialogue, and originality of plot, stands," says the *Glasgow News*, "almost without a rival among works of its own class." Mr. Emmett reappeared at Liverpool on the 22nd, as Fritz, and it was found that the performance had been strengthened in various ways. During the month Miss Leclerq appeared at Hartlepool, York, and Blackpool: the *Proof* company at Sheffield and Leeds; Mr. Craven Robertson's company at Portsmouth and Scarborough; Miss Marriott at Birmingham and Blackpool; the *Stolen Kisses* company at Wigan, Manchester, Cork, and Limerick; *Our Boys* company at Hastings and in Jersey; and Mr. Dampier at Birmingham.

IN PARIS.

The manager of the Comédie Française, as we announced a short time ago, has determined to revive some of the best examples of the old classical school of French tragedy, and on the 18th July the series was begun with a representation of Racine's *Britannicus*. Three or four years ago this tragedy was revived at the same theatre in order that Madame Arnould-Plessy might play Agrippine, but the performances are now remembered chiefly on account of the subtle charm which Mdlle. Bernhardt threw over her impersonation of the comparatively subordinate part of Junie. In its *nouveauté*, as every one versed in French theatrical history knows, *Britannicus* did not succeed. Like all men of widely-recognised talent, Racine, who had already produced *Andromaque* and *Les Plaideurs*, had a good deal of open or concealed enmity to contend with, and his profound egotism, to say nothing of the way in which he repaid the benefits conferred upon him by Molière, alienated from him many of the friends he had won on his first introduction to literary Paris. But little surprise will, therefore, be excited by the statement that *Britannicus* was derided both in and outside the theatre, and after eight representations had to be withdrawn. The poet replied with considerable bitterness to the criticisms to which he had been subjected, and might have created a diversion in his favour if he had not been unfeeling and imprudent enough to speak with marked disrespect of *Agésilas* and other works just written by the aged Corneille. "Never mind," said Boileau, the stanchest of the young poet's friends; "*Britannicus* is the best piece you have yet written, and posterity will bear out what I say." Posterity, we think, will disappoint Boileau's expectations. *Britannicus*, on the whole, is inferior to *Andromaque*, as it is inferior to at least two of the tragedies which Racine afterwards wrote. Nevertheless, it is a work of rare dramatic art. It forms a striking picture of Nero and his court, abounds in skilful delineation of character, and is written with remarkable force. Before Racine died its merits came to be perceived; it was taken from the shelf, and for more than a century held a prominent place in the répertoire of the Comédie Française. The Nero of Le Kain and of Talma, the Agrippine of Mdlle. Clairon, and the Junie of Mdlle. Gaussin, seem to have been among the proudest achievements of the stage. The classical school of

dramatic poetry has now gone out of fashion, and plays belonging to it are not frequently represented. M. Perrin has acted wisely in commencing his series of revivals with *Britannicus*, seeing that in addition to the merits we have pointed out it has a purely historical and human interest, and accordingly appeals to the sympathies of a mixed audience. Mdlle. Agar, an actress not unknown to London playgoers, takes advantage of the reproduction to continue her début. Her Agrippine is generally a satisfactory performance, and at times is really powerful. In the famous hemistiche, "Adieu! tu peux sortir!" she was at her best. In appearance, Mdlle. Agar was more matronly than Mdlle. Arnould-Plessy thought fit to be. Two other débutants, M. Volny and M. Sylvain, also appear in the play, the former as Britannicus and the latter as Narcisse. Junie is represented by Mdlle. Dudlay, Burrhus by M. Maubant, and Néron by M. Mounet-Sully.

The Théâtre Lyrique, which has shifted its quarters from the Gaîté to the Salle Ventadour, was reopened on the 2nd ult. under very favourable auspices. *Le Capitaine Fracasse*, as the *pièce de résistance* is called, is in many respects successful. The libretto is by M. Catulle Mendès, the music by M. Emile Pessard. As may be inferred from its title, the opera is an adaptation of M. Théophile Gautier's well-known novel. The task of the librettist was by no means easy. Gautier's work is rather a string of disconnected *tableaux* than a coherent whole, and the peculiarities of his style are not to be preserved in the process of adaptation without considerable difficulty. These obstacles M. Mendès has not entirely surmounted; but it is beyond dispute that in *Le Capitaine Fracasse* he has produced an animated and diverting work. M. Pessard, already known to fame as the composer of *La Cruche Cassée*, brought out at the Théâtre Taitbout in 1875, and of *Le Char*, recently played at the Opéra-Comique, may be said to have advanced his reputation by his last effort. The score is generally melodious and bright, the morceaux which call for particular praise being a violin gavotte for six little pages in the mimic play, an air sung by the gipsy Chiquita, a rondo allotted to the soubrette, and two duets—one pathetic and the other the reverse—in the last act. In some cases a little discord is apparent; the subject requires that the music shall be written in the Louis XIII. style, and M. Pessard occasionally yields to the temptation of clothing in a German dress the essentially French ideas on which the piece is founded. The Matamore of M. Melchissedec is a triumph from both a vocal and histrionic point of view; and Mdlle. Luigini is as picturesque and effective a gipsy as could be desired.

There is a new piece at the Gymnase, *Les Petites Correspondances*, by M. Hennequin and M. de Najac. That veracious journal, *Le Figaro*, is in the habit, it may be remembered, of inserting advertisements in which assignations of a questionable character are made. In the new piece three couples undertake in this way to meet each other in the Parc Monceau. They are a married lady, a husband, a young widow, an old beau, a servant-girl, and an aspiring young painter. They appear almost simultaneously on the scene, and a good deal of confusion ensues. The husband and the married

lady are man and wife, and each has come in the expectation of finding somebody else. Fortunately, or unfortunately, they do not recognise each other. The most amusing scene is in the third act. The old beau, believing that the servant, who wears a thick veil, is a lady by birth and training, follows her home, and seeing the door open, steps in unperceived. Confronted by the lady of the house, and mistaking her for the object of his attention, he speaks of their meeting in the Parc. Now it so happens that the lady is the wife we have referred to; she believes that the old beau is her correspondent, and the two are *tête-à-tête* when the husband, having duly kept *his* appointment, comes in. It is only by passing off the old beau as an uncle from the south—an expedient which compels him to talk in a dialect he is not well acquainted with—that Madame prevents a "scene." Into the other incidents of the play it would be unadvisable to enter. *Les Petites Correspondances* is not marked by much originality. In many respects it resembles *Les Dominos Roses* and *Bébé*, and some details seem to have been derived from *Le Mari qui trompe sa Femme*, *Le Monsieur qui suit les Femmes*, and *Le Mariage de Figaro*. Moreover, the idea of basing a plot upon an imbroglio arising from the "petites correspondances" of the *Figaro* was developed in a piece called *Pour Sauver Jeune Femme du Monde*, brought out at the Palais Royal at the end of April. M. Saint-Germain is the husband, Mdlle. Legault the wife, M. Francis the old beau, Mdlle. Alice Regnault the widow, and Mdlle. Giesz the servant.

The theatres are reaping a golden harvest. The *spectacles* are as numerous as during the regular season, and are patronised to an extent which exceeds the most sanguine expectations of the managers. The Exhibition, in fact, continues to attract large numbers of foreigners to Paris, and it would seem that four out of every five spend their evenings in a theatre. Even the Bouffes may be found in the list of entertainments. Thanks to the success of *Le Petit Duc*, many members of the company at the Renaissance have had nothing to do, and to provide them with employment M. Koning has taken the little theatre in the Passage Choiseul for the summer season. The piece they are playing in is *La Reine Indigo*, first brought out between three and four years ago. Mdlle. Zulma-Bouffar and M. Vauthier reappear in the characters which they then created. On the 13th ult. the Opéra Comique produced a new comic opera entitled *Pepita*. The "book" is by M. Nuitter and M. Delahaye, and the music by M. Delahaye *fils*. The heroine, a young heiress of Cadiz, is attached to George Wilson, an English midshipman. Her guardian, having spent a good deal of her money, is anxious to put off the day of reckoning as long as possible, and to this end declares that until a certain ill-favoured lady has found a husband Pepita shall remain unmarried. The young lady seeks refuge in the house of her lover's uncle, a British major, who by marrying the ill-favoured lady makes the course of true affection run smooth. The score is agreeably written, but the composer has fallen into the error of treating as a comic opera a story only fit for an operetta. The latest novelty is a four-act vaudeville called *Paris-Canard*, brought out at the Palais Royal last week. The creditors

of a young bankrupt, in order to get back their money, endeavour to bring about a marriage between him and Mdlle. Pacaudière, daughter of a millionaire. In this they eventually succeed, although a pretty actress, Mdlle. Rosabelle, has fallen in love with the spendthrift. Mdlle., however, has substantial compensation for her disappointment, as the millionaire makes her his wife. Mdlle. Jane Hading sings and acts this part with much piquancy and skill. One of the scenes, representing a rehearsal, is very diverting.

IN VIENNA.

The Austrian capital is unusually dull this summer, at least from a theatrical point of view. All the theatres have closed their doors except the minor Fürst Theater in the Prater, which affords a light semi-musical entertainment to summer visitors. The Burgtheater has well maintained its position, and in spite of the badness of the times the pecuniary results of the season were not unsatisfactory. The management adhere steadily to their plan of providing a varied bill of fare, and carefully avoiding the system of long runs. The consequence is that the Burgtheater has a more regular and discriminating audience than is to be found in any of the Continental theatres conducted upon the "long run" system. The new productions of the past season were in no instance works of much merit. *Die Reise nach Riva* of Herr Wilbrandt, which was produced at the beginning of the season, failed completely, and soon vanished from the playbills. Herr Gustav von Moser's comedy, *Der Hypochonder*, which had attained a striking success in Berlin, met with little favour from the cultivated audience of the Burgtheater; and the same prolific dramatist's *Mädchenschwüre*, of which this house had the first-fruits, was hardly more successful. Three or four one-act pieces and new German versions of two of Alfred de Musset's best-known plays complete the list of the novelties of the 1877-8 season. The rich fields of the regular repertory were cultivated with far better success, and Shakspere provided many an attractive programme. What strikes one first on glancing through the playbills of the Stadttheater during the season 1877-8 is the vast number of plays produced, and one is next struck by the immense preponderance of works of French origin. The season opened on the 1st of September with a respectable performance of a German version of Shakspere's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was repeated several times during the first month of the season. Then came a German version of Signor Cossa's tragedy, *Messalina*, which has a high reputation in Italy, but met with no favour here. A German tragedy, the *Königsmark* of Herr Paul Heyse, followed, and seemed to indicate that tragedy was to figure largely in the year's repertory. It was, however, but partially successful, and before the month of September had come to an end, the management strayed into the tempting fields of modern French drama. The manager, Herr Laube, began his campaign last September with the hope of being able to rely more upon native talent. Before the vacation he had invited the dramatists and the youth of Germany to compete for valuable

prizes which he offered for original plays. Dramatists of established repute held aloof, but a large number of aspirants to dramatic fame took part in the contest, which, however, produced deplorably paltry results. Herr Laube then returned to the domain of modern French drama, which he had before cultivated with success. The German productions of the past season were singularly few; the only one of them that seems at all likely to keep the stage being the *Grössenwahn* of Herr Julius Rosen. Herr Laube has assumed the management of the Stadttheater for a further period of three years. The departure of his leading comic actor, Herr Tewele, to undertake the management of the Carl Theater, leaves a blank hard to be filled up; but the result may not be altogether injurious, as it may render farcical comedy less prominent than it has hitherto been at the Stadttheater. The Court Opera extended its season into the present month, and on the 6th inst. had such a large audience as no programme, however attractive, could draw together in Vienna in the month of July. The attraction did not lie in the *mise-en-scène* of the ballet of *Brahma,* nor in the charming music of M. Delibes, which accompanies the grateful ballet of *Sylvia,* but in the presence of the Shah of Persia. When the *première danseuse,* Fräulein Linda, entered, his Majesty made an expressive gesture to his keeper of the Seals, Aza-ul-Musk, who gave such an assenting nod that the Viennese admirers of Fräulein Linda fear that her dancing-days in Vienna are over. The Court Opera is now closed. The Carl Theater has passed into the management of Herr Tewele, who used to be the comic mainstay of the Stadttheater.

IN BERLIN.

Though all the more fashionable theatres are closed, five houses still remain open for the entertainment of the million who cannot fly from town when the hot weather renders a country residence more desirable. The summer opera season at Kroll's Theater increased in attractive power when the Royal Opera was closed, and Herr Beck transferred his services to the minor establishment. Towards the end of June he appeared with great success in *Rigoletto* and in *Wilhelm Tell,* both of which formed part of his repertory at the Royal Opera, but his powerful voice is heard to greater advantage in the smaller house. His acting in *Rigoletto* was remarkably fine; in expressing his scorn of the courtiers, in the feigned merriment under which he concealed the tortures of a father's heart, and in the final outburst of vindictiveness, he displayed high histrionic capacity. The Gilda was Frau Marion, from Coburg, a finished singer, but not strong as an actress. In Rossini's opera, Herr Beck played the part of the Swiss hero with conviction, and found good scope for the display of his fine vocal powers; he was well supported by Herr Bussmann, as Arnold. The management afterwards added to their extensive repertory Auber's *Domino Noir,* with Fräulein Schaffrot as Angela, and Herr Grisa, Herr Krieg, and Fräulein Kalman in the other leading parts.

Returning from a long and successful *Gastspiel* at Cologne, the company of the Friedrich Wilhelmstadt Theater gave in their summer theatre a series of the operettas which they had played during the winter season. On the 4th ult. they produced a new farcical piece by Herren Salingré and Weller, with music by Herr Pleninger, entitled *Lockere Vögel.* It is in three acts, and consists of a number of scenes—some of themhighly diverting,and others in which the humour is very forced—loosely strung together. The principal characters are an elderly man, who finds the daughter of a woman he had deserted, and raises her from the position of a milliner by finding a good husband for her; a smart commercial traveller, who disguises himself in various ways for reasons not very clearly explained; an opera-singer who abandons her art and takes to innkeeping in the Spreewald; a young woman longing to be married, and whose intended turns up in a state of intoxication on the wedding morning. These characters figure in the principal scenes of a story so indistinct and ill-constructed that we shall not attempt to describe the plot. A comic quartette in the first act was much applauded. The second act is the weakest of the three, and for a while it seemed likely to imperil the success of the new production; but the third act containing a pretty scene of the Spreewald, with its green meadows and beech-trees, changed the feeling of the audience, and a fresh duet between the lovers, admirably sung by Fräulein Stubel and Herr Swoboda, materially helped to save the piece from failure, as did also the comic acting of Herr Schultz and Fräulein Schmidt.

The Ostend Theatre produced on the 8th ult. under the curious title of *Problematische Existenzen,* a German version of M. Adolphe Belot's well-known drama, *L'Article* 47. The drama was well received, though it has suffered much in translation. Cora found a powerful representative in Frau Marie Swoboda, an actress who excels in the expression of strong passion, and was quite in her element in portraying the furious hatred of the revengeful Creole. Herr Wiene played Georges du Hamel with much natural force and intensity, and Herr Simon was very happy in the character of the *petit crevé,* who is not ineffectually mixed up in the tragic story. On the other hand, the young wife had a hard and unsatisfactory representative in Fräulein von Born. The other theatres which still remain open are the Woltersdorff, where Offenbach's *Barbe Bleue* has been on the bills, and the Belle Alliance, where a new piece by the Viennese dramatist, Herr Anzengruber, entitled, *'s Jungferngift,* has been produced. This piece was first produced last Easter, and the author has gained a prominent position in the not very numerous band of contemporary German dramatists by his delineations of peasant characters and manners, as well as by his treatment of the lower strata of town life. He is not the first German dramatist who has sought to work this rich field, for Mosenthal and Frau Birch-Pfeiffer cultivated it with considerable success twenty years ago; but with all their merits those writers never attained the striking reality which is the main characteristic of Herr Anzengruber's peasant types. The principal plot of *'s Jungferngift* may be briefly stated. Josef Brunner, a peasant farmer, wishes to marry his daughter Regerl to Simion Simmerl, a neigh-

bouring farmer, who has more wealth than wit; but the girl has already given her heart to Caspar, a farm labourer. The lovers, in their despair, consult Tonerl, a charcoal-burner, a curious character, highly esteemed by all the people of the district, whom he delights with his superstitious tales and legends. This worthy man hits upon a device for saving Regerl from the hated marriage with Simion Simmerl, by working upon that simple creature's fears. He tells Simion that Regerl has a white liver, and that she will be the death of her first husband within a week from the marriage; such is the *Jungferngift* of the title. Simple Simion swallows this story with ready credulity, and is easily induced to abandon his claim to Regerl, and to allow Caspar to have the deadly first-fruits of her white liver, hoping after Caspar's death to renew his suit to the young widow. This story is worked out with great power and humour, and those who are familiar with the dialect say that the author has admirably caught the style and manner of the Austrian peasant's language. Side by side with the main plot runs a subsidiary story, ill-connected with it, and the excision of which would greatly improve the play. It deals with the doings of Professor Foliantenwälzer, who arrives at the village where the scene is laid, on a vacation tour; he discovers an old edition of *Apuleius*, and throughout the piece, whenever he appears, we find him rushing about in a state of wild apprehension that he may be deprived of his treasure. This learned professor is an extravagant caricature; he is an exaggeration of the type of the awkward man of learning, whom Benedix made familiar to the German stage; he stumbles over the chairs and comes into violent contact with the tables, and his unreality is the more sensibly felt as the other characters of the piece are drawn in a most realistic manner. Nor did the actor who played the part of Professor Foliantenwälzer tone down the extravagant features of the author's creation; on the contrary, he acted the part in the spirit of burlesque. As for the rest of the cast, though the Austrian dialect proved a stumbling-block for many of the artistes, it was fairly efficient. Fräulein Strahl, as Regerl, acted with force and humour, and the characteristics of Caspar and Simion Simmerl were well brought out by Herren Philipp and Heltzig. On the whole, this new piece is not calculated to enhance its author's reputation, and will not take rank with Herr Anzengruber's earlier works, the *Pfarrer von Kirchfeld*, the *Meineidbauer*, and the *Kreuzelschreiber*, each of which had special merits, which have not been equalled in any of the author's subsequent efforts.

IN MUNICH.

The capital of Bavaria has recently been a centre of attraction for the admirers of Wagner and the music of the future, owing to the production of *Siegfried* at the Court Theatre, with a *mise-en-scène* and an admirable cast. We need hardly remind our readers that *Siegfried* is the third of the series of four musical dramas constituting the *Ring des Nibelungen*, the production of which at the Bayreuth festival, in the summer of 1876, was regarded by many as the most important musical event of the

present generation. It was, we believe, on condition that the whole tetralogy should be produced at the Court Theatre of Munich in the coming autumn, that Herr Wagner assented to the isolated performances of *Siegfried*, which last month drew to this town all the musical celebrities of Germany. An acquaintance with the development of the myth in the *Rheingold* and the *Walküre* is essential to a full understanding of *Siegfried*, which is the most buoyant and spirited of the four dramas, and has more human interest than the others. The contrast between the character of the fearless, generous, and merry Siegfried and that of Mime, the wily old dwarf, to whose care Sieglinde, dying in childbirth, had committed her infant son Siegfried, is extremely effective. *Siegfried* is not an opera, in the ordinary sense of the word, but a drama with a most elaborate instrumental accompaniment, and though it takes five entire hours in performance, it exercises such a fascination over the audience that one observes none of those signs of prostration which are but too apparent in the listeners after a performance of some of the master's gloomier productions. It abounds in passages of rare power and beauty, amongst which we may mention the music of the scene in which Siegfried forges the sword, the touching accompaniment to the dragon's death, the marvellous descriptive music in the scene where Siegfried dashes through the flames to Brünnhilde, and that of the concluding love-scene. *Siegfried* makes very heavy demands upon its principal interpreters, both from a histrionic and from a vocal point of view, and in neither respect were the leading artistes of the Munich Court Theatre at all unequal to the task. The title part, which was filled by Herr Unger at Bayreuth, was here taken by Herr Vogl, who has a tenor voice of great power.

IN ROME.

Soon after its production at Milan and other northern cities, M. Sardou's *Bourgeois de Pontarcy* found its way down to Rome, where it was received with such favour that it was soon played at three theatres simultaneously—namely, at the Valle, the Corea, and the Campidoglio. The opera season at the Politeama, which lasted into July, was not marked by the production of any novelty. Revivals of Donizetti's *Marino Faliero* and *Belisario* were the principal features of the season. All the Roman theatres are now closed except the Manzoni, where a season of Italian opera-buffa was begun early last month with Sarria's pleasing work, *Il Babbeo e l'Intrigante*, played by a competent company of Neapolitan artistes. The programme of this company comprises also *Le Precauzioni*, by Petrella; *Cicco e Cola*, by Buonomo; *Il Cuoco*, by D'Arienzo; *Il Ventaglio*, by Raimondi; and *Piedigrotta*, by Ricci, some of which are quite new to Rome.

IN MILAN.

The principal event of the last days of the season was the first production in Milan of a comedy of the Abate Chiari, a contemporary of Goldoni. *La Serva senza Paron*, which had long

been forgotten, was unearthed by Signor Moro-Lin some months ago, and produced with complete success at Venice, Padua, and Bologna. At Venice it was so highly appreciated that the Moro-Lin company played it eight times during their recent season in that city—a longer run, let us remind our readers, than a new play often attains on the Italian stage. This old comedy has wonderful freshness and comic *verve*, and might almost pass for a work of Goldoni. At the Manzoni Theatre all the best strength of the company was in the cast, and the play was heartily applauded. A dispute between women at the end of the second act, and a scene in the fourth act between two lovers who have fallen out, were particularly effective. The graceful and sympathetic Signora Zen played the heroine with a natural gaiety which was perfectly irresistible, and Signori Moro-Lin, Covi, Bianco, Zago, and Signore Fabbri and Paladini made up an excellent *ensemble*. Chiari's comedy was repeated on the occasion of the benefit of Signora Zen, together with a *proverbe* by Signor Giganti, entitled *Lontan dagli occhi, lontan dal cuore* (Out of Sight, Out of Mind). The last night of the season was devoted to Signor Gallina's popular comedy, *El moroso de la Nona*. The success which the Italian version of M. Sardou's *Bourgeois de Pontarcy* attained at the Manzoni Theatre in May, during the season of the Pietriboni company, induced Signor Dondini, the manager of the minor Fossati Theatre, to try whether his company could render the play attractive to the public. The result was satisfactory, and M. Sardou's comedy drew good summer audiences for ten evenings, Signor Dondini's comic impersonation of the Maire being the principal attraction, though the serious characters were also very respectably played. The Dal Verme Theatre continued its opera season till last week, when the dwindling audiences gave the signal for vacation. During the latter part of the season a Signorina Lodi made her début as Amina in the *Sonnambula* with success, and *Rigoletto* was well rendered by Signor Bertolasi and Signora Musiani, while the ballets of *Brahma* and *Cristoforo Colombo* completed the programme on alternate evenings. The only new opera produced during the Dal Verme season was one entitled *Bernabò Visconti*, by Signor Franceschini, an obscure musician, who is said to have made great sacrifices to procure the performance of his work, which, sad to say, was judged quite devoid of merit, and was received at first with impatience, and before the curtain fell with irreverent laughter. The only theatre that still remains open is the Commenda, which relies for support upon the humbler classes. In this hot weather, the baths, which the newspapers advertise, we know not why, under the heading "Spettacoli," are more attractive than the theatres.

IN NEW YORK.

Probably never before was New York so bereft of public amusements as at this moment. In point of fact, there is no theatre of any account open. One manager has turned over his establishment to a combination Moody and Sankey choir for sacred

concerts, Sunday evenings, admission free. The east side houses of the second class are nearly all closed. There is probably as much money in people's hands to spend for these entertainments as there ever was, but all the actors and actresses of any note have gone to Paris. Mr. Gilbert's one-act "eccentricity," *Creatures of Impulse*, was the last novelty brought out at the Park Theatre. The *New York Times* describes it as "a nonsensical farce—so nonsensical, indeed, that its performance might almost be considered as a hoax upon an audience." The droll make-up of Mr. Le Clercq, as Bloomblehardt, a conventional miser, and his exceedingly comical acting, caused frequent merriment. *Creatures of Impulse* was followed by Mr. Lingard's sketches and by *Our Boys*, which seem likely to be given for some time to come. Mr. Bartley Campbell's *Vigilantes*, produced at the Grand Opera House on the 1st ult., had but little merit, and, after an inglorious run of six nights, was withdrawn.

IN SAN FRANCISCO.

Mr. Jefferson recently fulfilled what proved to be a most successful engagement here. "His Rip Van Winkle," says the *Chronicle*, is "incomparably the best impersonation we have had on our stage of late. But for the lingering smell of paint, we could fancy ourselves in the little village of Falling Water, living through that quaint old legend which has become a household tale all over the world. The play is one of comfortable length, and, though Mr. Jefferson has almost all to say and do, it is simply a delight to watch and listen to him. There is no sign of effort from the beginning to the end of the performance. Everything is natural,—so natural that no study could possibly have produced such ease. We can only specially admire the scenes he most appreciates, and enjoy them all. We know of no more delightful piece of acting than that incident in the Catskill Mountains, when he finds himself among the gnomes. He imparts to the whole scene a realism which is quite as fascinating as the picture that arises in fancy when one reads the story; and so admirably has the stage management done its portion of the work, the audience is quite as astonished at the gnomes as Rip Van Winkle appears to be. The delicate power which enables him to assume unconsciousness of more than twenty-four hours' absence is an attribute of the actor possessed by no other man on the stage that we know of. And yet it seems to have lost something since we saw him act the part eight or ten years ago,—some nice artistic touches, some delicate expressions of face, some trivial movements, and just a little of the old richness and oiliness of accent. So easily does even a thing that lives in the memory and is a joy for ever lose something of its gloss when lost from recollection for a period and recalled under other circumstances. But it is so rounded, so finished, so complete as it is, that we may rather suspect memory of playing us false than that any lineaments are wanting to the perfect picture, or that any trace of beauty has been lost or has faded." Mr. Jefferson next appeared as the tutor in an American version of

Bébé. The *Chronicle,* after adversely criticising the piece from a moral and a dramatic point of view, expressed its regret that Mr. Jefferson should have undertaken a part so unworthy of his talents. "We recognise," says the critic, "the fine play of feature, the graceful and expressive action, and the rich humour which only wants means and opportunity for full development. The singing of the passage from the law-book to the tune of 'The Sweet By-and-By' is indescribably ludicrous, and other detached points are well made and taking. But they are too few and far from enough to atone for the shortcomings of the vapid dialogue." Finally Mr. Jefferson played Pangloss, Bob Acres, and Hugh de Brass; but, notwithstanding the merits of these impersonations, the house was not so full as it would have been if the far better known *Rip Van Winkle* had been in the bills. Mr. Jefferson left at the end of June, his place being taken by Mr. George Rignold, who appeared as Henry V.

IN AUSTRALIA.

The success of Mr. Creswick in Sydney is uninterrupted. One of the parts he appeared in there was Iago. "Mr. Creswick," says the *Echo,* "portrayed the character of Iago with a skill and ability not often witnessed. In the first place, he looked the character admirably, and at once impressed us with his commanding influence over those with whom he came in contact—the influence of high intellectual power rather than mere good fellowship, although he was not wanting in this. The grand feature of Iago's character, as drawn by Shakspere and represented by Mr. Creswick, was a super-subtle hypocrisy which baffled even the most penetrating intelligence. There was no grimace nor idiotic distortion of the visage by which Iago is often degraded to the level of a London pickpocket. The audience never failed to feel for a moment the supreme influence of Iago's intellectual power, and to be convinced that this was the great instrument with which he worked, and which, in hands so skilful and subtle, became the all-subduing power before which they saw all men bend and every obstacle vanish. His address and manner were also most fascinating and plausible, and gained him ready access to the favour and love of all his comrades, not a soul dreaming of his real character, a tribute to his fine-acted hypocrisy of the most undeniable description. As Mr. Creswick portrayed this character we felt not the least surprised at the influence he gained over Othello."

Echoes from the Green-Room.

TIMES have changed. Eight years ago Shakspere spelt ruin and Byron bankruptcy. Mr. Chatterton at present thinks of commencing his next season at Drury Lane with a play by—Shakspere.

Hamlet and *The Corsican Brothers* will be revived at the Lyceum Theatre next season, Mr. Irving, of course, playing the principal characters.

Madame Patti was at Her Majesty's Opera on the first night of *Carmen*, and was so pleased with the work that she proposes to add it to her repertory next year.

Madame Nilsson is at Mont d'Or. She returns to England in the autumn for a provincial tour, under the direction of Mr. Pyatt. Madame Nilsson is said to have lost £10,000 by the failure of an American agent through whom she had invested money in some land speculation.

Mdlle. Zaré Thalberg has entirely recovered from the indisposition that for some time deprived the public of her services. The loss of a young artist so gifted and promising could ill be afforded. Mr. Gye has made some acceptable additions to his company of recent years, but few more acceptable than this young lady.

Mr. Charles Reade has sent a manuscript play to Miss Clara Morris for her consideration.

Mr. Toole sat in the dress circle of the Lyceum Theatre on the 3rd ult. When he appeared there was a round of applause, and during the *entr'actes* he was the observed of all observers. He comported himself with becoming gravity.

The first anniversary dinner of the Green-Room Club was held on the 7th ult. at the Zoological Gardens, under the presidency of the Duke of Beaufort. Nearly a hundred members were present. There was but one drawback to the enjoyment of the evening. The singers were far from efficient. It is understood, however, that they were engaged at the instance of Mr. Sothern.

Miss Kate Claxton and her husband are yachting off the coast of Maine.

Madame Ristori has accepted an engagement at the Teatro Real, Madrid, to commence next winter.

Mdlle. Albani has just been engaged by the direction of the Imperial Opera of St. Petersburg for the next winter season. She has to sing only twice in each week, and the salary to be paid for that service is 7,000f

(£280) per night. It happens, too, that the chief prima donna of the Imperial Opera is almost always presented with a case of jewels by the Emperor and Empress, and with another by the subscribers to the Opera.

The marriage of Mdlle. Albani and Mr. Ernest Gye will be solemnised at the Roman Catholic chapel, Warwick-street, Regent-street, on Tuesday next.

Since her marriage, Madame Patti has received no less than £140,000. Of this £76,000 has been spent, and the rest is at present in the possession of the Marquis de Caux.

Mr. Irving will give a reading at Belfast on the 16th August, in aid of the Samaritan Hospital there, and subsequently at a meeting of the Northampton Shakspere Society. On the latter occasion he will be entertained at supper.

Signor Rossi will appear at the Théâtre Italien this month.

Mr. Sarjent, agent in advance, is in London endeavouring to arrange engagements for Mdlle. Modjeska.

There was a pleasant garden-party the other day at the residence of Miss Kate Bateman (Mrs. Crowe), Brook-green, Hammersmith. Mrs. Charles Kean, Mdlle. Taglioni, Mr. Irving, Mr. Toole, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Neville, and Lord Newry were of the party.

The report that Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kelly are about to take the Court Theatre proves to be without foundation.

The tenth anniversary dinner of the Junior Garrick Club was held on the 25th ult., under the presidency of Lord Alfred Paget. The Club continues prosperous.

Mr. Thomas Thorne, who has gone from Aix to Spa, is much better.

Miss Genevieve Ward has arrived at New York. Miss Ward is a native of that city, and a descendant of one of the old families of the metropolis. Her grandfather on her mother's side, Hon. Gideon Lee, was one of the early mayors of the city.

It is stated that Mr. Boucicault recently fell asleep in the green-room of a theatre after a performance, and that on returning to his hotel he found "Use Hail Columbia Hair Restorer" inscribed upon his remarkably bald head. But then the Americans have a genius for advertising.

According to a Russian journal, the Shah of Persia wishes to have the telephone "laid on" from the Imperial Opera at St. Petersburg to his palace at Teheran, so that he can "hear the stars without paying over £300 a night for them."

Mr. Max Strakosch has been proceeded against for breach of promise of marriage. The plaintiff is a young milliner named Mary Smedley, who states that he promised in 1875 to marry her, but lately broke his word, for the reason that he was a Jew and she a Christian. This inconceivable

baseness caused her "great nervous prostration," and she claims $10,000 as damages. Mr. Strakosch was arrested, but having found bail started for England.

Mr. Charles Warner was at the anniversary dinner of the Green-Room Club. Little did he dream that at that very time some burglars were carrying off his wardrobe from his dressing-room at the Princess's Theatre. He bears his loss with characteristic self-restraint—nay, has not even been heard to express a wish that he had met the thief *in flagrante delicto.*

On the 9th inst., at St. George's, Hanover-square, Mr. Patrick Henderson, only son of the late Mr. Robert Henderson, of Towersville, Helensburgh, N.B., was married to Miss Louise Henderson, the well-known actress, who is the youngest daughter of the late Mr. Edward Lowe, of Barbadoes. The bride will not again appear on the stage.

"What's the matter with your eye?" was a question put last week in Liverpool to Mr. Emmett, who in New York received a violent blow in the face. "Oh," was the cheerful reply, "it's only been undergoing an operation at the hands of a knockulist, that's all."

More than one company is being organised in England to play in Cyprus.

Herr Wagner has completed the music of *Parsifal.* Herr Jäger, of the Stadttheater, Hamburg, is selected for the part of the hero, which he has been studying at Bayreuth.

During Mr. Irving's provincial tour, which commences early in September, Miss Kate Bateman will reappear at the Lyceum Theatre as Leah and Mary Warner. In the latter character she will be supported by Mr. Billington as George Warner.

It is believed that before long a dramatic version of *Carmen* will be produced in London.

The Gaiety Theatre will shortly be reopened. Among the novelties to be produced in the course of the ensuing season are a new comedy, by Mr. F. C. Burnand, founded on a work by Thackeray; a new farcical comedy, by Mr. Henry J. Byron; Mr. W. S. Gilbert's successful Gaiety burlesque, *Robert the Devil,* re-edited by the author; a new burlesque on a popular subject, by Mr. Henry J. Byron; and two new comic dramas, by M. Hennequin and MM. Meilhac and Halévy.

It is probable that one of the earliest novelties of the season of 1879 at Her Majesty's Theatre will be the *Armida* of Gluck, first produced at Paris just 101 years ago.

Mr. Bancroft intends to revive *Caste* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre at no distant date.

The ill-fated St. James's Theatre has been taken on lease by Lord Newry for twenty-one years, and will be enlarged and otherwise improved.

Mr. W. S. Gilbert's piece will be produced at the Olympic before Mr. Neville's lesseeship terminates.

Mr. J. S. Clarke has definitely taken the Haymarket Theatre, which will be reopened next month with a new comedy from the pen of Mr. Byron. Mr. Terriss is one of the company engaged for the season.

Next month *Les Cloches de Corneville* will be transferred to the Globe Theatre, and Miss Lydia Thompson will appear at the Folly in comedy.

A son of Mr. Edmund Yates is playing in the country under the name of Edmund Smedley.

Different reasons are assigned for Mr. Sothern's sudden journey to America, some saying that he simply desires a little salmon-fishing in Canada, others that he is about to thrash a journalist who has maligned him. Be the cause what it may, he returns to England this month, to reappear at the Haymarket as Lord Dundreary.

Mr. Boucicault is nothing if not theatrical. He has built a yacht at a large cost, and on it, during his summer cruise, will write the play he has promised Mr. Lawrence Barrett.

Madame Judic is about to migrate from Paris to St. Petersburg.

The subsidies granted by the French Government to theatres in Paris will not be lowered, as had been expected. Indeed, the *matinées littéraires* are now to receive State support.

The representatives of Honoré de Balzac have transferred *Mercadet* from the Théâtre Français to the Palais Royal, where the principal character will be played by M. Geoffroy.

The management of the Théâtre Cluny is about to pass from the hands of M. Paul Clèves to those of M. Tallien, the actor, now at the Odéon.

The new play which M. Victorien Sardou is writing for the Boston Theatre is nearly completed.

The Théâtre du Château d'Eau will reopen with *Une Erreur Judiciaire*, a drama in five acts and eight tableaux, by M. A. Belle, librarian of the Société des Auteurs.

M. Charles Lecocq's new opera, *La Camargo*, will be produced early in the winter at the Paris Renaissance.

Signor Verdi's *Aïda* is in rehearsal at the Théâtre Lyrique, and will be sung in French.

M. Gounod's *Polyeucte* will be produced early in September at the Grand Opera House.

Le Roi s'amuse is to be played at the two principal Parisian theatres. At the Français, M. Coquelin will play Triboulet; at the Odéon, M. Lafontaine.

The Théâtre Guignol at Lyons has been utterly destroyed by fire.

The Porte Saint Martin has in rehearsal *Le Capitaine Grant*, by M. Jules Verne and M. d'Ennery. The piece is, of course, of a "scientific" character.

Mdlle. Anna de Belocca has left for Paris. Mr. Gye has re-engaged her for the whole of next season.

Next winter the *Pirates de la Savane* will be revived at the Théâtre Historique, the chief part, originally sustained by Miss Menken, being played by Madame Océana, a lady hitherto known only to the frequenters of the Cirque.

Miss Munroe, who is well versed in French, has been engaged by M. Koning, the manager of the Théâtre de la Renaissance, for a period of three years, to commence in December next. M. Lecocq expresses himself delighted with her singing.

The remarks made by French countrymen as they pass through the public *foyer* of the Théâtre Français are often diverting. "So this is the Maison de Molière. Is his bedroom to be seen?" "That," says one, "is a statue of Talma." "He has but very little clothing." "True; but you should know that in his days actors were not so well paid as they are now."

M. Francisque Sarcey lately made an attack in his weekly *feuilleton* on the management of the Odéon, and discussed the claims of the present directors of the Porte Saint Martin to occupy M. Duquesnel's place. The illustrious critic is taking time by the forelock. The Odéon will continue in the hands of M. Duquesnel two years longer, and the reign of MM. Larochelle and Ritt at the Porte Saint Martin will not terminate until the end of 1879.

The days of the *claque* appear to be numbered. On the 17th ult., at the Paris opera, the *chevaliers du lustre* were conspicuous only by their absence. Those who imagined that the performance would excite less enthusiasm than before were completely disappointed. Mdlle. de Reské was applauded to the echo, and one of her songs was encored. M. Perrin, of the Comédie Française, is in high glee. He was the first to abolish the *claque*, and historians of the stage in the nineteenth century, he has been heard to say, will honour him as the originator of a great theatrical reform.

Madame Mallinger is engaged for the season 1878-79 at the Royal Opera-house, Berlin.

Madame Adelina Patti will appear at the Kroll Theatre, at Berlin, in October.

Herr L'Arronge, for a number of years manager of the Stadttheater, Cologne, died a short time since at Riehl, near that city.

The vocal rehearsals of Wagner's *Siegfried* have commenced at the opera-house, Vienna.

M. Léo Delibes' *Sylvia* is in preparation at the National Theatre, Pesth.

Mdlle. Zaré Thalberg has returned to Barcelona.

Two new Italian operas will shortly be produced: *Il Fratello d'Armi*, by Signor Parravano, and *Bianca Fiora di Tolosa*, by Signor Pozzetti.

A new opera *Barnabo Visconti*, by Signor Franceschini di Orema, is in rehearsal at the Dal Verme Theatre of Milan.

Teodora, by Signor Meola, is in preparation at the Politeama, Naples. According to the *Occhialetto*, the friends and admirers of the composer have "subscribed a fund for the expenses of this performance, for the pleasure of hearing a piece which they know and esteem."

Signora Pezzana, a tragic actress of high reputation in Italy, proposes acting in America in English next season. *Hamlet* is to be one of her specialities.

A new opera on the *Barbier de Séville*, composed by Signor Graffigna, a young composer, will be brought out at Venice in the ensuing autumn. The groundwork is almost in every respect the same as Beaumarchais' play.

Miss Rose Eytinge, we understand, has secured the American right of the *Woman of the People*.

It is said that Signor Foli has abandoned the Scandinavian tour, and, although he has not yet signed, contemplates joining Mr. Mapleson's operatic company in the United States.

The *Cigale* appears to have attracted much attention in America. During the forthcoming season it will be played in different parts of the United States by Lotta, Miss Putnam, Miss Maggie Mitchell, and Miss Imogen.

Madame Marie Roze, who is now at Richfield Springs, will give concerts this month at Newport, Long Branch, Saratoga, and other watering-places. She returns to America next season for a period of eight months as a star of a powerful combination, including Signor Frapoli, the tenor, and Madame Pisani, the contralto.

Miss Clara Morris, having in a great measure regained her health, will act in Chicago during the coming engagement there of the Union Square Company. *Miss Multon* and *Conscience* will be presented.

By telegraph we learn that *Diplomacy* has been well received at San Francisco. Mr. H. J. Montague is in the cast.

A few weeks since the *Boston Home Journal* advised Miss Emma Abbot "to confine her singing to New York, where she will not find so many who have a keen realisation of what is artistic, and also of what is so unworthy to be associated with art." Poor New York!

Mr. R. M. Field has purchased Mr. W. G. Wills's *Olivia* for the Boston Museum.

Mr. Edwin Booth and Madame Modjeska will appear at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, next autumn. Mr. Fisk is also negotiating with Miss Cavendish.

Mr. John E. Owens has returned from the West, and is resting in Baltimore. He proposes taking a company through the fall and winter, and then starting in the spring of 1879 upon a two years' tour of the world.

Mr. Lester Wallack will begin an engagement at the Brooklyn Park Theatre on September 20.

Mr. Willie Edouin has accepted a new play, *Alhambra; or, the Pearl of the Palace*, written by Dexter Smith. Music for the piece has been composed by Mr. Woolson Morse, of Boston.

Madame Modjeska's six weeks' engagement at the New York Fifth Avenue Theatre begins on September 30. She will open the fall and winter season at Philadelphia.

A new Irish play by Mr. Dion Boucicault will be brought out at Wallack's Theatre, New York, in December, with the author in the principal rôle.

The forthcoming season at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, seems likely to prove very successful. Miss Ada Cavendish, Mr. Jefferson, and Mr. Edwin Booth have been engaged, and if Mr. and Mrs. Kendal should accept an American engagement they will also appear there.

Books.

THE MODERN FRENCH THEATRE.

THE articles which Mr. Walter Pollock recently contributed to the *Examiner* on the principal French players of the present time have been republished in a collected form by Messrs. Hachette. The book will certainly repay perusal, for the author is well informed on his subject, has a keen eye for histrionic excellences and defects, and writes with considerable grace and effect. As may be supposed, he has nothing to say in favour of the prevailing tone of French comedy. M. Dumas, indeed, contends that his plays are admirably moral, but they are only so in this sense, that when analysed the picture which they present of vice and its consequences is revolting. But the mass of an audience do not care to analyse, to pierce beneath the surface. They come to be amused, and they depart with the immediate impression of what has amused them on their minds. The constancy with which a theme is put before them cannot but lead them in the end to believe in its constant and pervading existence. Then the highly successful school of dramatic writing represented by M. Feuillet delights in enlisting sympathy for vice by surroundiug it with an alluring and mystifying sense of poetry and exaltation. Lately a sort of reaction has set in in favour of "pièces saines," but the tone in which Mr. Pollock refers to it is less hopeful than is warranted by the striking success of plays like *Les Fourchambault*. And now let us turn from plays to players. The *doyen* of the Comédie Française, M. Got, infuses a strong reality into his performances, and combines rare qualities of humour and pathos. He has gestures which are peculiar to him, especially that of pointing at an object with a jerky movement of both hands. Mr. Pollock says that M. Got never seems to grasp a part when he first undertakes it. Point after point is missed; it is as if he were feeling his way. This want of grasp, however, is not observable after a few performances. Perhaps the most finished of actors is M. Delaunay, who has passion and fire at his command as well as graceful liveliness and attractive sentiment. The height of sparkling comedy is reached in his Dorante (*Le Menteur*); in *La Nuit d'Octobre* he sounds the depths of passion. Curiously enough, Mr. Pollock makes no allusion to tho greatest of this actor's recent triumphs—his Valère in *Le Joueur*. Next comes the lady on whom the mantle of Rachel has descended,

Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt. In the most impressive tragedy and the lightest comedy she seems equally at home. Her Phèdre reminded Mr. Pollock of the terrible description in *Vathek* of the dead in the Hall of Eblis, and when the confession came it "struck and blasted the senses like lightning." The name of M. Mounet-Sully is generally regarded as synonymous with the wildest extravagance; but Mr. Pollock, while freely censuring the actor's faults, holds that he possesses true passion. Madame Favart, who has just passed a new turning-point in her career, has a strength in passionate outbursts which is unsurpassed, and is at her best in parts where the comedy of drawing-rooms veils some tragic interest. In the expression of irony and contempt the words seem to cut as they fall from her lips. By a look or a gesture she can lay bare a whole history of suffering, passion, or remorse. Her heart-broken cry in *Les Caprices de Marianne* rings through the house like a death-knell. In speaking of Mdlle. Croizette, who can reach a high level of passion and art, Mr. Pollock urges many objections to realistic renderings of death-scenes. M. Febvre is an accomplished actor, but at times is so indistinct that even French ears fail to catch what he says. M. Coquelin is wonderfully versatile; he can command laughter, draw tears, and handle disagreeable characters in comedy with great skill. M. Maubant, with his fine presence and telling voice, is the very incarnation of classical drama. Mr. Pollock, after dealing with the lesser lights of the theatre, devotes a few pages to Madame Trebelli and M. Faure, both of whom have carried the faculty of impersonation to something near perfection.

PLAYS AND POEMS.

Mr. Gilman has issued a volume containing a tragedy in five acts, entitled *Guzmán the Good*, a "play" in three acts, entitled *The Secretary*, and some poems. The main incidents and the leading characters of the tragedy are historical. The scene is laid in the fortress of Tarifa, and in the Moorish camp without the fortress, in the year 1294, when Tarifa was besieged by Aben-Jacob, the king of Morocco, aided by Juan, the bastard brother of Sancho, the king of Castille. Guzman, surnamed "the Good," undertook the defence of the fortress, and allowed his son Pedro, who had fallen into the power of the enemy, to be slain before his eyes rather than surrender the place. This story of Brutus-like fulfilment of duty was treated by Mrs. Hemans in her dramatic poem of the "Siege of Valencia." Mr. Gilman seems to have aimed at making the same story the subject of a tragedy suitable for stage representation, and if he has not succeeded in rising to the full height of his tragic theme, he has

produced a work by no means devoid of merit. The character of Philippa, Juan's mistress, is Mr. Gilman's own invention; her story is well woven into the main plot, and the author deserves credit for the ingenuity with which he makes her jealous love contribute to the catastrophe. On the other hand, he singularly weakens the tragic effect of the historical occurrence by causing Guzman's son to be hastily murdered as the Spanish army is advancing to his rescue. Mr. Gilman is more successful in the lighter scenes than in those which a well-known French critic calls the *scènes à faire*. He is happier in representing Philippa's vanity and frivolity as she gossips with her attendants than in giving expression to the anguish of the mother as she pleads with Guzman to save their son's life even at the cost of honour. The blank verse, in which the tragedy is written, runs smoothly, and is for the most part free from inflation, but in avoiding that Scylla the author occasionally falls into the Charybdis of colloquialisms, as, for instance, when Guzman in his great sorrow is urged by one of his officers: "take not on so." As a favourable specimen of Mr. Gilman's style, we will quote a few lines from a soliloquy of Pedro, who is awaiting death in the Moorish camp:—

> ". . . . I have heard how some young swimmer,
> When in the wild exuberance of strength
> He parts his water with his shining arms,
> And blows the foam away all laughingly,
> Hath on a sudden felt some monstrous creature
> Growing upon the bottom of the sea,
> Stretch forth its cold and slimy, long, dank arms,
> And twining round him, suck him gradually,
> Despite of all his mad, convulsive struggles,
> Slowly, slowly, gradually down:
> And so comes death to me."

How far from faultless the style is at its best we need hardly point out. *The Secretary* is also written in blank verse. Its story seems to be entirely the author's own invention, and abounds in improbabilities and absurdities. The *dramatis personæ* for the most part describe their own characteristics in words, instead of allowing us to infer them from their conduct. Perhaps the only well-drawn character in the piece is one Fribble, a toady and hanger-on to nobility, who, in delivering a message to his patron, says: "My lord, your lordship's presence is much longed for; the noble lord, your lordship's father, sent me to seek your lordship, and to pray your lordship to his lordship, would my lord——." This reminds us strongly of a counsel for the prosecution in a trial for murder, who, being asked by the judge where the knife with which the deed had been done was found, replied: "My lord, if your lordship please, in the cellar, my lord." We have not space to examine the plot of *The Secretary*, which, indeed, hardly deserves much attention.

MR. WINTER'S NEW POEMS.

Mr. Winter, the accomplished dramatic critic of the *New York Tribune*, is editing a series of plays. As prompt-books, they fill an aching void. Having begun with *Hamlet*, *Richelieu*, *King Lear*, *Julius Cæsar*, and *Brutus*, Mr. Winter will add seven more standard plays to this tragic series, which should be followed by one devoted to comedy. Poet even more than critic, Mr. Winter has recently dedicated a book of lyrics to his friend, Joseph Jefferson. This little volume, big with feeling, has been republished by Messrs. Tinsley, under the modest title of *Thistledown*. Mr. Winter is a genuine singer, tender and pathetic. His music is almost always in the minor key, written with tears in the language of the heart. In rhythm he is an artist. Here is a charming lyric addressed to

My Queen.

He loves not well whose love is bold!
I would not have thee come too nigh;
The sun's gold would not seem pure gold
Unless the sun were in the sky.
To take him thence and chain him near
Would make his beauty disappear.

He keeps his state—do thou keep thine,
And shine upon me from afar!
So shall I bask in love divine,
That falls from love's own guiding star;
So shall thy eminence be high,
And so my passion shall not die.

But all my life shall reach its hands
Of lofty longing toward thy face,
And be as one who speechless stands
In rapture at some perfect grace.
My love, my hope, my all, shall be
To look to heaven and look to thee.

Thy eyes shall be the heavenly lights;
Thy voice shall be the summer breeze,
What time it sways, on moonlit nights,
The murmuring tops of leafy trees;
And I will touch thy beauteous form
In June's red roses, rich and warm.

But thou, thyself, shalt come not down
From that pure region far above;
But keep thy throne and wear thy crown,
Queen of my heart and queen of love!
A monarch in thy realm complete,
And I a monarch at thy feet!

Few books of modern lyrics are purer and truer in tone than *Thistledown*, which we warmly welcome as the honest work of an

honest dramatic critic. It is understood that another volume of poems from the same pen will appear at no distant period.

THE ROBBERS.

Schiller's *Räuber* has been newly adapted to the English stage by Mr. C. E. Meetkerke. Many accounts have come down to us of the excitement created by this tragedy when it was first brought out, and, in particular, it is reported that after the representation of this tragedy at Fribourg a large party of the youth of the city, among whom were the sons of some of the chief nobility, captivated by the grandeur of the character of its hero, Karl Moor, agreed to form a band like his in the forests of Bohemia, elected a young nobleman for their chief, and even settled upon an Amalia for him; but their plan was discovered by an accident, and the enthusiastic youths were prevented from carrying it into execution. No such excitement will be created by the performance of Mr. Meetkerke's adaptation of the famous tragedy, if any manager should be so ill-advised as to produce it. All the wild grandeur and crushing force of the original have evaporated in the merciless process of compression to which it has been subjected, and in the effort to reduce the exuberant production of genius to the dimensions of a modern acting play Mr. Meetkerke has given us a work which bears about the same relation to Schiller's *Räuber* as the corpse of a man who has lingered on for days after the amputation of a limb does to the vigorous body of an Australian cricketer. Though the original is written in prose, Mr. Meetkerke has imprudently chosen blank verse for his adaptation, being of opinion that the little favour hitherto enjoyed by *The Robbers* in England is due to the fact that it has never yet met with an interpreter determined to produce in poetry the poetic spirit of the original. Mr. Meetkerke's blank verse can only be called poetry in the sense of the famous saying of M. Jourdain's professor—"Tout ce qui n'est pas prose est vers, et tout ce qui n'est pas vers est prose." Schiller's prose is so poetical that it often falls naturally into blank verse; while the adapter's blank verse is so prosaic that it rarely rises above the level of prose. Let a few lines from the second scene of the third act, where Karl is discoursing philosophically with his fellow robbers, speak for the occasional flatness of the adaptation:—

Karl. Why, therefore, should man prosper in the aims
He has in common with the ant; yet fail
In that which places him within the sphere
Where God reigns? Is this really then his limit?
Schweirtze. I'm sure I don't know.
Karl. Well said! you don't know!
You will do better not to seek to know!

Nor does the adapter rise superior to grammatical mistakes. In the scene with the monk, in the second act, Karl is made to say:—"This ruby is from the finger of a minister who I stretched bleeding," &c.; and a little down, as if he liked that form of speech, he says:—"I wear this opal in honour of a priest who I despatched." But, to turn from these minor defects to the general blemishes of the work, Mr. Meetkerke has so freely transposed the scenes, so cut down the famous soliloquies, so purged and weakened the language of the more desperate members of the band of robbers, that his adaptation rather resembles a lengthy analysis of the tragedy than an adaptation properly so called; that the characters are mere shadows of their original selves; and Karl's companions rather resemble the noble youths of Fribourg, who wanted to play the robbers, than the violent men into whom Schiller breathed the fierce sentiments of his young soul in its rebellion against the stupidly-severe discipline to which he had been subjected.

We have not one word to say in commendation of Mr. Meetkerke's version, for every phrase in it that struck us as praiseworthy proved on investigation to be bodily taken, without acknowledgment, from Dr. Charles Hempel's prose version of *Die Räuber*, a translation which is not free from defects, but which gives the English reader a fair notion of Schiller's tragedy, and is as superior to Mr. Meetkerke's version as Richebourg is to vin ordinaire. The very first page of this version contains several lines borrowed from Dr. Hempel's translation, and wherever we compare the two versions we find numerous instances of this kind of "conveying." Two independent translators may occasionally translate lines exactly alike, but when we find two men within a few lines concur in rendering "Wie's Fisch im Wasser" into "Sound as a roach," "Ich sollte schweigen auf ewig" into "Would my lips were sealed," and "Noch dörft ihr nicht Alles hören" into "You cannot—must not, yet know all," we have no hesitation in drawing the inference that this is no mere coincidence.

Scraps.

MR. COOTE, of the Map Department of the British Museum, has, according to the *Athenæum*, brought to light some new facts respecting the map which is sometimes found inserted in the *Voyages of Hakluyt*, and which has been described as the best map of the sixteenth century. He says it is no other than the "new map" referred to by Skakspere in *Twelfth Night*, act. iii., scene 2, a play produced in 1601. The substance of the arguments in its favour may be summarised thus: At the period of the production of the play mentioned, it could be regarded as no other than the *new map* in the then *new projection;* new, as showing for the first time on an English map the discovery of Barents, in 1596, evidently alluded to by Shakspere in the same scene of the play. It had upon it more lines than are to be found upon its old rival in *Linschoten's Voyages.* Its claims to be regarded as the "new map with the augmentation of the Indies" is shown by the augmented or improved geography of the whole of the Eastern portion of the map, laid down probably under the superintendence of Hakluyt. The arguments used by Mr. Coote will form the substance of a monograph to appear shortly.

THE following is a literal copy of a play-bill issued in the year 1793 by the manager of the Theatre Royal, Kilkenny:—"Kilkenny Theatre Royal, by his Majesty's company of comedians. On Saturday, May 14, 1793, will be performed by command of several respectable people in this learned matrapolish, for the benefit of Mr. Kearns, the tragedy of *Hamlet!* Originally written and composed by the celebrated Dan Hays, of Limerick, and insarted in Shakspere's works. Hamlet by Mr. Kearns (being his first appearance in that character), who, between the acts, will perform several solos on the patent bag-pipes, which play two tunes at the same time. Ophelia by Mrs. Prior, who will introduce several favourite airs in character, particularly 'The Lass of Richmond Hill,' and 'We'll all be unhappy together,' from the reverend Mr. Dibdin's 'Oddities.' The parts of the King and Queen, by direction of the reverend father O'Callagan, will be omitted, as too immoral for any stage. Polonius, the comical politician, by a young gentleman, being his first appearance in public. The Ghost, the Gravedigger, and Laertes, by Mr. Sampson, the great London comedian. The characters to be dressed in Roman shapes. To which will be added an interlude, in which will be introduced several sleight-of-hand tricks by the celebrated surveyor, Hunt. The whole to conclude with the farce of *Mahomet the Imposter!* Mahomet by Mr. Kearns. Tickets to be had of Mr. Kearns, at the sign of the Goat's Beard, in Castle-street. The value of the tickets, as usual, will be taken (if required) in candles, bacon, butter, cheese, soap, &c., as Mr. Kearns wishes, in every particular, to accommodate the public. ☞ No person whatsoever shall be admitted into the boxes without shoes or stockings."

The Theatre.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1878.

The Watch-Tower.

STUDY AND STAGE.

IT requires no very bold flight of imagination nor any very vigorous effort of memory to call to mind the typical meeting of the Mechanics' Institute, or of the local Shakspere Society, at which a speaker could broach no view more orthodox or more sure of sympathetic reception than a condemnation of theatres and theatre-goers. Time was, and that not so very long ago, when a society which met for the intellectual recreation and instruction of its members would have considered that one of its chief *raisons d'être* was necessarily an antagonism to the theatre, an opposition and unfriendly rivalry, either positive or negative, either expressed or implied. The Institute was not perhaps avowedly started to woo young men away from the fascinations of theatrical performances, after the manner in which the coffee-palace lures its patrons from the gin-shop; but it was by no means uncommon to find the worthy and well-meaning promoters of such associations congratulating themselves and their hearers upon their provision of a healthy antidote and alternative to the pernicious attractions held out by the theatrical speculator. No longer, said they, will it be necessary for those who desire to amuse themselves in their evenings away from home to spend their precious hours of recreation in the dissipation of the music-hall, the theatre, or the dancing-saloon; discrimination was not the strong point of these excellent people. No longer need education be at a standstill whenever

relaxation is enjoyed; henceforth innocent mutual instruction and mutual entertainment might go hand-in-hand, as they never could when any such agency as the stage was employed. Even the Shakspere students, with their periodical reading of plays and of papers concerning plays used to Pharisaically thank Providence and their president that they were not as other lovers of Shakspere, and were content to gain an insight into the works of the great dramatist without the meretricious aid of actor and actress, without the material assistance to be derived from scenic illustration, and without compromising themselves by affording the support of their shillings and half-crowns to an institution so harmful and so unworthy as the contemporary stage. The feeling of moral and mental superiority over the playgoer was vague no doubt; but, like other prejudices, its strength was in inverse proportion to that of its definite basis. We shall scarcely be exaggerating if we say that these opinions have again and again been expressed in so many words by those interested in the foundation, the support, and the progress of the useful institutions intended to provide rational and elevating amusement for the leisure hours of young people who are engaged in work of one description or another. We shall certainly be correct in affirming that in years gone by views such as those which we have briefly sketched were frequently implied by those in authority whenever the objects and means of these institutions were publicly formulated and discussed. What the cause of this attitude may have been, we need not here consider at any length; it was but a single phase of the once-popular estimation of the theatre as the enemy of decency, morality, and religion.

Bearing thus in mind the past we can scarcely fail to be interested in the present, and the alteration in public opinion on this subject which is nowadays made evident. The change of front is evidenced in a thousand ways, some of them intrinsically important, and some of moment only after the fashion of the straws which show the direction of the wind. It does not, of course, very much matter what the chairman of this committee or the president of that parochial society may have to say on the subject of Macbeth and its moral influences, or concerning the social status of the actor and the character of the actress. His testimonial to the late Mr. William Shakspere is creditable in intention, but can scarcely possess very much weight, and his opinion of this or that player must be taken for what it is worth. As an indication, however, utterances such as these may fairly be considered to have a wide and weighty signification; for the mere fact that they are listened to and approved by their hearers gives them an importance beyond and without any which they could on their merits command. It is, therefore, with

genuine interest that we watch the manner in which Mr. Irving's recent visits to Northampton and Birmingham have been received by what we may roughly describe as a non-playgoing public. What playgoers think of Mr. Irving's power we have known for a long time, and this we can most of us readily discover for ourselves. The people whom the popular tragedian has of late been addressing, are, as a whole, not essentially theatre-goers at all. They are members either of such bodies as the Harborne and Edgbaston Institute, or the Perry Bar Institute, or the Northampton Shakspere Society. They are for the most part made up of the very individuals who, but a few years back, would have believed that in giving to an actor a public welcome, and in recognizing him as a teacher and guide, they would be stultifying all their professed principles as well as sapping the very foundations of the edifice which they helped to raise. They would have thought that to make a stage-player, be he never so popular and never so generous, their honoured guest, was little less than suicidal, and would at best be tolerated only for the sake of the good that the actor might chance to derive from the company in which he found himself. How different from all this is the spirit in which Mr. Irving's recent visits have been received, may be best judged from a sentence or two in the speech of the Harborne chairman: "Mr. Irving," the gentleman took occasion to remark, "belongs to a profession which, like too many other professions, was remarkable for narrowness. . . . . In the course of an extensive knowledge of players and acting I do not remember any case of an actor who, like Mr. Irving, has gone beyond the bounds of his profession to give direct and personal interest to literary and scientific institutions. This seems to be a very important incident in the history of our time, not only because it shows that a great deal of the old prejudice against the stage is dying away, but because it proves that with all the large demands upon his time, Mr. Irving takes a wide view of his profession, shows that there is something in it beyond the footlights and the green-room, and has enough intelligence and energy to take interest in places and work not immediately connected with his own profession." These are remarks which do credit to the good sense of the speaker; and their reception by the large audience, as well, indeed, as the whole of the friendly proceedings, shows that they were felt to be no words of mere idle compliment. Here, as at Northampton, Mr. Irving has succeeded, in a way beyond the reach of most other actors, in establishing a new relationship between the stage and a large portion of the thoughtful and educated public. With excellent tact he has defended the profession to which he belongs without seeming to admit that it requires defence. He has

enlarged upon the elevation of the drama which must follow upon the raising of the level of public culture, and has insisted on the mutual benefit to be derived both by the stage and by such institutions as those in question from any successful effort to raise the standard of taste in either. As he gracefully told the Northampton Shakspere Society, "the encouragement of such societies as theirs to actors is beyond one's expression and gratitude, for such work as they did (in their studies of character, and motive, and meaning), must be a marvellous incentive to stage action." To onlookers it may doubtless seem that for the present, at all events, the preponderating advantage will be in the other direction, and that the benefit gained by local literary bodies from their co-operation with student-actors of eminence is likely to throw into the shade the value of such hints as they can afford to the practised player. That such general gain there is, however, we can have no manner of doubt, and from every point of view we may receive it with the heartiest welcome.

Meanwhile there remains for consideration the aspect of the subject to which we first alluded. Without any slavish craving after worldly advancement for the actor, we may yet be honestly glad to note any marked increase in the respect shown to him by society. This respect must in the long run mean much in its influence upon those to whom it is shown. The calling, which has for so long been ostracised, cannot but gain as a profession, without losing as an art, by every step which it takes away from that Bohemianism—to use the word in its worst sense—which has been its imaginary charm and its actual curse. It can only be good that the stage-player should be recognised as a member of society worthy of respect by reason and not in spite of the art which he has chosen to follow; for such recognition will carry with it the social responsibilities which no man or woman, and certainly no body of men and women, can safely disavow. And if the actor has in this direction something to learn, something which the foolish prejudice of the narrow-minded has, till lately, prevented his learning, he has assuredly much to teach, and it is of incalculable good that his powers of teaching should no longer be limited by the shackles of conventional superstition and distrust, at once ignorant and ungenerous. Surely an actor of mark could not employ his leisure more profitably, though he might do so more restfully, than in thus knitting closer the bonds between the study and the stage, and assuming for himself and his brother-workers in a glorious art the position with regard to lovers of the drama which is clearly theirs by right, and which on all grounds it is expedient that they should fill.

THE COST OF PLAYGOING.

THE outcry of those who are blessed or cursed with fixed incomes has of late years taken many and various forms. The housekeeper complains that every article of necessary food, from bread and milk and meat upwards, has within her recollection increased in price by five-and-twenty or thirty per cent., or she herself puts it that a sovereign is now-a-days worth only fifteen shillings. The government clerk is perpetually asking for a new scale of pay on the plea that a hundred per annum now means something very different from what it did when his rate of remuneration was originally fixed; and the country clergyman grieves to find himself no longer passing rich on forty pounds a year. We need not inquire what is the remedy for this state of affairs, if, indeed, a remedy be required, nor how the decreased value of the golden pound is to be accounted for and corrected. We may be content to believe that where there is so much smoke there must really be a good deal of fire, and may safely assume that such compensation as the owner of the fixed income must undoubtedly possess in the decreased cost, for example, of clothes, of travelling, and of various minor luxuries of life, is really inadequate. It might, perhaps, be fairly surmised that amongst these compensations in the way of cheap luxuries would certainly be found theatrical entertainment, since the theatrical entrepreneur can more readily than most other traders adjust the price of the commodity which he supplies to the conditions of the moment and the demands of his clientèle. It is true that he too suffers both directly and indirectly from the increased cost of living. He has to pay the members of his company at the rate which would have been held exorbitant only a very few years ago. He is expected to mount his pieces at an expense and with a completeness hitherto unheard of. His rent is enormous, and he is generally rated and taxed in a manner which, if not absolutely unfair, is certainly out of all apparent proportion to his average profits. But with all this he has at hand singularly ready means of meeting his growing expenses, as may be judged by the fact that the recent addition made at many houses to the price of their stalls implies in some instances an increased profit of nearly £100 a week. Moreover, it is clearly the interest of the theatrical manager, who supplies a commodity with which all can dispense if they will, to so arrange his charges as to keep theatre-going well within the pecuniary limits of popular amusement, and to rely upon the support of the largest possible number of patrons. Prohibitive prices cannot in the long run pay him, however select—to use the reporters' favourite adjective of compliment—an audience he may

secure. It may be interesting to consider briefly how he and his arrangements stand with regard to the large class which now-a-days helps to swell the cry of the man with the fixed income.

At once, then, we may as well state our belief that there is a large body of would-be playgoers to whom the manager of the present day offers none of the facilities which they have a right to demand whenever an attempt is made to attract them to the theatre. Our position may, perhaps, best be explained by an example. Let us take the instance of a married man with an income of something under four hundred a year, less, that is to say, than the amount on which a not too liberal government allows him—on the ground, it must be presumed, of his inadequate means—an abatement of the chief direct tax which he is called upon to pay. Let us suppose that this man wishes to take his wife to the theatre from one of the suburbs in which most of his class live. He wishes to take her not luxuriously, but at any rate with the comfort which is a lady's right; he does not want to hire a brougham and dash up to the stalls as though he were a wealthy "swell," but neither, on the other hand, does he wish to rough it as he was content to do in the bachelor days gone by; so he books a couple of seats in the dress-circle at the cost of ten or perhaps twelve shillings, with in most cases an extra shilling for booking. Add to this the usual sixpence for programme, and the sixpence each in the cloak-room, where coat and bonnet have perforce to be left after a journey. So far we have reached thirteen shillings or so, and by the time we have taken into account any refreshment needed by the pair during a long evening in an exhausting atmosphere—which refreshment is always abnormally dear—and the necessary cost of the journeys, we shall find that the night's amusement leaves very little change out of a sovereign.

Now from one point of view a sovereign is not much, and any evening's pleasure secured at such an outlay would appear cheap enough at the price. But it is clear enough that the number of sovereigns which can during a year be prudently spent in this fashion and at this rate by our typical friends is exceedingly limited, and their visits to the theatre in a twelvemonth must be proportionately rare. As a matter of fact they will be so rare that by degrees they will die out altogether; and our friends, having lost all knowledge of and interest in the theatrical doings of the day, will cease to be playgoers at all, save once a year when they have to go for the sake of a country cousin, and once a year when the little ones look for a pantomime. One other alternative they have, they may join the vast army of order-hunters. They may spend spare time where they cannot afford money in scheming for "paper";

and once bitten by the free admission mania they will feel for the future unable, save by a cruel wrench, to pay even for the entertainment which they can well afford. If, indeed, they once taste blood, it will be almost impossible to check them for the future in their thirst for free admissions. And managers who go in for papering their theatres are too apt to forget that in almost every case where a man goes to the play for nothing he will be rendered so much the less likely to pay for his theatrical entertainment on any future occasion. Every one who has, or is supposed to have, any business which connects him with theatres, must be familiar with whole groups of tormentors who are always pestering him for "orders," and who are proud of the fact that they never pay to go into a theatre. These order-hunters, however, numerous as they are, are of course necessarily in a considerable minority, and the chances are that would-be playgoers of the class and means referred to will end by simply ignoring the theatre altogether as a practicable resort.

Two answers may be made to these exiles from the theatre, or to one who makes himself the mouthpiece of their complaints. First, the manager may argue that people who cannot afford the dress-circle and its concurrent expenses ought not to object to the upper circle or the pit, in the same way that poor pittites ascend uncomplainingly to the gallery when times are bad or expeditions to the theatre are exceptionally numerous. We may be told that our fathers and grandfathers used to have no objection to the shilling or half-crown pit, and that people who cannot afford to pick and choose must not be squeamish. But is it squeamish for a refined woman to object to the hustling necessary to get a fair seat in the pit, to dislike having baskets of "lemonade and stout" thrust under her notice, and feel doubtful about her companions who sit so very close to her, who suck oranges and crack nuts and indulge in various habits not recognised in polite society? Is it squeamish for the husband of this lady to feel even more acutely than she, that the whole thing is out of the question? There are, it is true, the alternatives of gallery or amphitheatre, which are still less to be thought of; and of family circle or upper circle, or whatever it chances to be called, which is generally very high up, very stuffy, more uncomfortable than the pit in its general accommodation; and, of course, far worse as regards hearing and seeing the performance. But it remains true all the same that playgoers of the class alluded to—and upon its composition we shall presently touch—cannot, save at a great sacrifice of the comfort and decency to which they are ordinarily accustomed, visit any part of the average theatre, save private boxes, stalls, and dress-circle. The second answer which may be made, will simply be the suggestion, that if these superfine

paupers do not like the arrangements provided in return for the money which they are prepared to spend, they can stay away, and will not be greatly missed.

Here again we join issue with the theatrical manager's imaginary defence of this portion of his arrangements. The class of playgoers kept away by the considerations which we have named is, we contend, the very one which in the long run will most certainly and most seriously be missed. It includes the back-bone of the educated and taste-possessing people for whose return to the play-house we have so long been hoping against hope. It includes professional men, and artists, and authors, and students of every kind except the small minority which has made out of art, or science, or study, an income equal to that of the uncultured tradesman. It includes, in fact, the large bulk of the possible playgoers whose patronage would be the most discriminating, the most valuable, and the most welcome to the manager really earnest in his desire for the advancement and elevation of dramatic art.

We have shown, then, or attempted to show, that to the educated middle classes of small means and refined habits the theatre is now-a-days closed by its expense, and we have also expressed our conviction that the people thus shut out are just those whose presence is to be most earnestly desired. What then is the remedy to be proposed? We know very well from experience that the best managers are ready enough to meet the wishes of the public in any reasonable manner. They have only to recognise the evil of appealing exclusively to the highest and lowest, the richest and the poorest of the public, to admit that something should be done for the intermediate class of their possible patrons. What that something is, it can scarcely fall within our province to describe in detail; possibly a portion of the pit might with advantage be reserved at an increased price; possibly the price of the dress-circle might be reduced, the stalls and boxes being left for those with whom sovereigns are no particular object. In any case all managers should certainly follow the example of the few amongst them who have totally abolished all extra incidental expenses, who provide programmes gratis, who do not charge people extra for paying beforehand for their seats, and who do not let their servants receive "tips" for doing their ordinary evening's work. Moreover, each for himself should institute a reform of his refreshment saloons, and, instead of driving people away by exorbitant prices for inferior articles, should let them have wholesome things at something less than three times the cost price. As it is, no one can, except as a young bachelor, frequent the theatre for his amusement who is not either very comfortably off, or related to an

acting-manager, or blessed with very primitive taste. That this should be so is a pity, and it will be a still greater pity if the tendency increases, for it will, from all points of view, be a bad day for the stage when the bulk of its support comes from the gallery and the stalls.

SUBSTITUTES.

IT is no doubt very necessary that actors and actresses should take holidays, and it would probably be greatly to the advantage of the work which they achieve that they should take a great many more holidays than they do. Their labours are much harder than they seem to the outsider, who fancies that it must be a delightful thing to earn your daily bread by amusing yourself all the morning and afternoon, and then amusing other people for an hour or two in the evening. Upon this fact it is perhaps hardly necessary to insist for the instruction of those who read this periodical; but actors themselves are only too apt to forget that they owe it as a duty to themselves to allow in their arrangements for recurring periods of rest, during which they may not only recruit their physical energies, but may supply their efforts with the fresh mental force needed in order to prevent their becoming merely mechanical. In a certain sense each repetition of a rôle will undoubtedly render that rôle easier and easier to play, especially with colleagues whose method of support becomes more and more familiar. But after a short time, and beyond a point which is reached in a very early stage of the long run which is now the manager's ambition, each of these repetitions must obviously render the rôle harder and harder to play really well; harder to interpret with any suggestion of spontaneity. The phases of the character which have proved most effective will unconsciously be unduly emphasised to the manifest injury of the artistic whole; the favourite scenes will be elaborated, and the telling hit of the dialogue will be unnaturally accentuated. More than this, the player who has a prominent share in a representation which takes the town by storm will inevitably find himself at a disadvantage when he is called upon after many months to attempt a new impersonation. He will insensibly have got into a groove, let him strive as he may to avoid doing so; and out of that groove it must in many cases be very hard to get. With the present tendency, therefore, towards the increase of long runs—runs which are at the least expected to last through a whole season, and sometimes throughout two or three—it becomes more than ever

necessary that the actor should follow the example of other professional men and artists, and should allow himself ample periods of mental and physical relaxation, and should avoid, as far as may be, the evil consequences which, as we know, result from any form of exertion, however intellectual and intrinsically elevating, from the moment when it becomes monotonous and mechanical.

The actor, then, is to take his holiday and the actress is to take hers, especially if at the theatre where they are engaged a long run happens to be the order of the day. The actor is to be off to the sea-side, or to his friends in the country, or for a tour on the Continent, or for a series of air-baths in Switzerland, or, perhaps, even for such change as is afforded by a passing provincial engagement. But what is the manager to do in the meantime? Can we fairly expect him to withdraw his successful production the moment that the services of the players who have helped to make the success cease to be available? Just at the present moment we fear that a good many people feel inclined to reply to this question in the affirmative. Having booked their seats for some extremely popular programme, say, for example, *Olivia* or *Our Boys*, *Pink Dominos* or *Diplomacy*, a week or ten days beforehand, they have visited the theatre, whichever it might be, full of curiosity and interest concerning not only the play itself, but concerning the impersonations of individual players. They arrive to find that the very performers of whom they have heard so much, and whom they so specially wanted to see, are absent. Hereupon they are not unnaturally disappointed, and their disappointment easily turns into indignation. They are angry with the advertisement—which was perfectly correct when it was issued—for having misled them; they are angry with themselves for not having visited the production earlier, and very likely they are angry not only with the absent actors and actresses, but with their unhappy substitutes.

That it is ridiculous to complain because Miss Ellen Terry or Mr. David James, Mr. Charles Wyndham or Mrs. Kendal takes a summer holiday like the rest of us, will of course be readily admitted so soon as the first burst of irritation at the "sell" is over; and it will hardly be contended seriously that the manager is in any way bound to withdraw a piece during the summer season because it is neither convenient nor perhaps practicable for him to keep his whole company together. If he takes care to avoid inducing people to visit his theatre under an erroneous impression, by means of announcements not altered up to date, and is perfectly honest in his method of advertising his change of company, there is clearly nothing to be said against his course of action, at any rate on the score of unfairness. Sometimes, it must be confessed, there is a

suggestion of the tricky in the manner in which the passing absence of a "leading attraction" is slurred over or concealed; and any device of the sort is of course to be gravely condemned, whilst it would be fitly punished by an action for obtaining money under false pretences. But, as a rule, nothing is to be said in sympathy for the grumblers except *caveat emptor;* whilst they are to be pitied for their inability to enjoy a play of approved merit unless it chances to be performed by the identical artistes whose names are in every one's mouth in connection with the success in question.

But though we can scarcely pity the manager for the discredit which he thus innocently, but profitably, suffers, nor the playgoer, who has in most cases none but a sentimental grievance, nor the absent actors and actresses, who are presumably enjoying themselves elsewhere, there are some people connected with the little misunderstanding for whom we have often been sincerely sorry. These are the artistes who for the time fill the vacancies left by their successful predecessors. Theirs is assuredly a difficult task, nor is it rendered the easier by the fact that it is almost sure of missing the appreciation that it may deserve and that it would have won under any other conditions. They follow immediately upon performers with whom, let them do what they may, they are certain to be disadvantageously compared. They will be blamed, not for what they do or fail to do, but for being what they are. They are themselves, and by a good many of their audience they were expected to be other people. Moreover, even when they are deliberately compared with their predecessors, they are almost sure not to give satisfaction. We cannot stand, as it were, far enough away from contemporary creations of the dramatist to judge fairly between two stage representatives of them who follow closely one upon another. We believe in him or in her who comes first. If the copy by the second is accurate, we cry out because it is an imitation; if the view taken by the new-comer be entirely original, we are unpleasantly startled, because we fail to recognise the special features that we had associated with the character presented. The work of the substitute who replaces an absentee in a successful piece of the day is difficult in itself, and by reason of its ungrateful nature it deserves at the hands of audiences a consideration which it does not often obtain.

Portraits.

III. and IV.—MR. AND MRS. KENDAL.

GREETED for childhood's sake by a London audience on her first appearance as an actress at the age of four, applauded in the Bristol Theatre for the sweet voice with which when three years older she, playing Eva, sang the songs of her part in such a way as to nearly cause a loss to the rational and a gain to the lyrical drama, Miss Madge Robertson started early in the race for fame. That she also started well, and lost no advantage thereby, our eyes and her popularity assure us. The provinces gave her the necessary opportunities for the training and development of her artistic faculties. She spent the springtime of her youth in them, and London may well envy the country playgoers who enjoyed that gratification almost denied to those of the capital, the sight of such an *ingénue* as she must have been in all her vernal freshness. The surprise excited by the remembrance that she made her début in infancy, and has since, save during the period devoted to general education, steadily pursued a theatrical career, will be no doubtful compliment, but a most appropriate tribute to the qualities which have preserved her unharmed by the deteriorating effects of stage routine. Society at least, or the world on the other side of the footlights, will understand us if we describe the best characteristics of her style by saying that it possesses those charms of naïveté and gentle ease which give now and then some rare *ingénue* and real amateur unearned but indisputable superiority over older and skilful rivals. Her merits were speedily acknowledged when she reappeared in London. Her speech was at that time, perhaps from nervous adherence to past lessons, somewhat too deliberate, and the naïve precision with which she carefully and slowly denounced the wicked man in the *Great City*, we well remember, caused us more delight than the dramatist meant to afford. But the slight constraint of manner and formality of expression wore off while she was playing a series of lighter rôles at the Haymarket and, for a short time, at the Gaiety. The promise held forth by her acting up to this time was amply fulfilled when, after playing in the *Palace of Truth*, she appeared as Rosalind in *As You Like It*—became an embodiment of that pure, high spirit of English maidenhood which Shakspere saw. No common qualifications suffice for such a rôle. Any affectation or awkwardness, the least mistake of prudery for modesty, the slightest overboldness or fault in taste, would be fatal. Following the instinct of a fine

THE THEATRE Nº 2 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Madge Robertson Kendal.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

nature, Miss Robertson unerringly used its pleasing gifts, and as Rosalind revives the drooping Celia, so she revived the languishing faith of educated men in the possibility of the characters which have an impersonal existence for those who dream over the pages of Shakspere. The part was within the range of her sympathy and force. But it is not the only part of the idyllic comedy, and for this reason—we can suggest no other—her greatest triumph was yet to be won in a modern work, susceptible of a more perfect general rendering. In the autumn of 1871 a play in which she was the central figure was produced. It demanded all her most charming attributes, and each of them, in pleasing succession, was naturally displayed. Curiously gazed the audience as the sculptor drew the veil from his masterpiece, which his love of its beauty had endowed with life. "Was the statue so fair?" was the prevailing thought. If already possessed of the sense of hearing, its soul must have been soothed by the murmur of approval that could be heard in the house. "But would the voice from the marble be heard?" Galatea with first breath murmured Pygmalion's name, and never was voice more soft and liquid. "Could the form in movement preserve its grace?" She moved, and every change of pose was graceful. Higher perfections than these were soon brought to the aid of the play. The traits in her frank, natural style which suggest to us the pure-minded, artless *ingénue* were displayed to best advantage. Who but she, with such evident innocence, could have so corrected the effect of the accentuated equivoques of the droll Chrysos as to leave their humour and purge their offence? What other actress could have delivered in the same mellifluous rhythm and pathetic tenderness the five lines describing the advent of life? Thorough and long was the success she secured for a piece which, though enriched with ideas and language, was not beyond the reach of adverse criticism. This was more than she could accomplish for the next work from the same desk. Tempests of blinding, passionate tears in one of her genial temperament would be as phenomenal as a hurricane in sunny June; and when she fails to act unnaturally we do not count it failure. Neither *Charity* nor *Queen Mab* was good enough to much advance the fame of the actress who played the title-rôles during 1874. But a dramatic trifle, written with unusual brilliancy of dialogue, gave the public a most favourable opportunity of recognising her powers of fascination in a sphere familiar alike to actress and audience. The irritating little idiosyncrasies which render many of those who are ladies on the stage unable to keep up the illusion to experienced eyes, never marred our enjoyment of *Uncle's Will*. The "archness" of the provoking cousin was not the archness of darkened eyebrows—the laughter commanded by stage directions. It was subdued to becoming smiles. The room was not traversed,

the train was not spurned, and the quiet composure of an intelligent, friendly, lady-like girl at work in some West-end drawing-room was not simulated, but shown. Praising those qualifications we have ascribed to Miss Robertson, we must guard against disparaging by implication her undoubted proficiency in her art, the highest quality of which is, to borrow the Latin axiom, its self-concealment. So much of it as we are allowed to perceive consists of those winning little arts of pleasing not neglected by her sex at large; such as the frank look of lively interest, of glad surprise, eyes quick-twinkled, clear of dew, to see your meaning—delicious arts of kind-souled flattery, which she is sometimes tempted to summon unnecessarily to her aid. Her fame, established in the plays we have mentioned, was enhanced by an appreciative rendering of the character of Pauline in *The Lady of Lyons,* at the Opera Comique, and by representations of leading parts in *Lady Flora, The Nine Days' Wonder,* and another of Mr. Gilbert's pathetic, perverse, poetical dramas, *Broken Hearts.* By a strange chance of fate in Miss Robertson's life, while her brother was giving us charming pictures of the true characteristics of English modern life in blameless beneficial plays, which might have been inspired by fraternal recollection of the actress who could best appreciate and develop their meaning, her abilities and personal attributes were employed elsewhere, unconsciously correcting the tendencies of fanciful but unnatural dramas, having no useful aim. The theatre which the works of the brother raised from obscurity to so prominent a place amongst those in London has recently had the sister to uphold its reputation. Whether she could do so most effectively by means of his plays or by clarifying from impurities more exciting pieces from the French is a point on which doubts may be entertained. She who made *Peril* pardonable can do very much, as her skill in *Diplomacy* has since attested.

And now let us speak of her partner in greatness. In 1861, at the age of eighteen, Mr. Kendal joined the company at the Soho Theatre, which then included Miss Ellen Terry, Mr. David James, and Mr. Wyndham. In the following year he went into the country; and in the course of a hard probation had the advantage of acting with Mr. and Mrs. Kean, Miss Fawcit, and Mr. Boucicault. Towards the end of 1866 he appeared at the Haymarket. The result was favourable, and his impersonations of Orlando and Pygmalion and other characters gave him a firm footing in London. His acting is characterised by high intelligence, refinement, artist-like finish, and sustained force. Mr. and Mrs. Kendal are almost invariably successful on the stage, but they cannot appear to greater advantage than when they are seen in their charming home near Gordon-square, with their already numerous family about them.

THE THEATRE Nº 2. NEW SERIES

WOODBURYTYPE

W. H. Kendal

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

The Round Table

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE QUESTION.

By H. J. Byron.

THERE are certain cut-and-dried observations that have almost become truisms concerning some of the minor drawbacks to perfection in modern theatrical management, which I propose to consider from an opposite point of view. I propose to consider them from the point of view of the playgoer, an essentially selfish person, but one on whose smile and good opinion hang the fortunes of all who get their living from the theatre. What the critics and that very large and vague section of the public who "have the welfare of the stage at heart" may say is all very well in theory, no doubt, but in practice the ideal state of things suggested would not tend, I believe, to the advantage of the average playgoer, nor do I think the ultimate result would be particularly satisfactory to anybody. At all events, the three or four subjects on which I shall briefly touch may as well be looked at on "the seamy side," if only for the novelty of the view.

We are continually hearing of the disadvantage under which the stage suffers from the altered state of affairs in the provinces. Some years ago there were "circuits"—that is, certain managers had so many theatres, and took their companies on from one town to another, thus filling up the year. Then Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, Birmingham, &c., had their regular stock companies, and the London houses were supplied with actors from the best country theatres. Thus the actors, as a rule, who came to town had benefited from provincial training, and were seldom if ever "novices." So far so good. *Romeo and Juliet* could be played at short notice, with the certainty that Romeo would be thoroughly at home, and Juliet experienced and "safe." Nowadays it is not altogether improbable that Romeo may be a little amateurish, and Juliet scarcely up to the genuine tragic mark. But (and here let me state that the present writer has seen a good deal of provincial training, has, when a stage-struck lad, announced that the "carriage was in waiting," has sung "comic" songs between the pieces, and played Eugène de Lorme, Jim Baggs, and the "Long Boy" in the "comic business" of a pantomime on the same night, so that he knows what he is writing about) *But*—oh, what a long parenthesis!—let us confess Romeo is

a *young* lover, not an elderly person, with a deep voice and an ultramarine chin, and that Juliet, if inexperienced, has at least beauty in her favour, which Miss Fitzhetherington, of ever so many Theatres Royal, certainly had *not*, although she *had* played with every star of eminence for thirty years. Space being of importance in *The Theatre*, I cannot continue my contention further; but I trust for the intelligent reader I have struck the key-note of my argument, namely, that what the playgoer gets for his money now is as valuable as ever it was, so far as general all-round acting talent is concerned. As for the provincial audiences, they have an opportunity of seeing all the most attractive plays of the period produced with a completeness and effect they never witnessed before. The provincial playgoer has certainly benefited by the new state of things.

We are continually being told that the "engagement for the run of the piece" is a mistake. In what respect? A piece is better cast generally than it would be with a stock company, and the playgoer is spared the painful spectable of a venerable Sir Lucius O'Trigger with a polyglot brogue, or a Dudley Smooth with his voice in his boots. The opportunities afforded actors to exhibit versatility, and not unfrequently a decided talent for a totally different class of character from that with which they had been hitherto associated, are numerous. I could enumerate many instances of the bold but judicious selection by author or manager of particular actors or actresses for special parts, supposed beyond their grasp or unsuited to their style, proving of the greatest advantage to the piece, the public, and the artists themselves. Of course this does not apply to a piece written with a special view to the members of the company. But in that case it is simply, as it were, the engagement of *the author* for the run of the piece.

"One-part" pieces are continually coming in for the animadversion of self-appointed critics, and here again, when such pieces ever *are* produced, which is seldom, the playgoer decidedly benefits. For this reason, he goes to see a piece with his great favourite Thompson in the principal part. Thompson being at the time the great attraction, the playgoer wants to see as much of him as possible, and if he only sees Thompson in a part as good as Johnson's he considers himself defrauded. It has become very much the habit to call all pieces in which there is a fine leading character, a "one-part" piece. I have continually seen the dramas written for Mr. Toole described as of this class. I have myself written him six, and hasty generalisers would feel some surprise if they took the trouble to count up the list of artists who have achieved successes in the "subordinate characters"; successes which have led in many instances to fame. Even *Hamlet* is a "one-part" piece; yet *all* the

parts require good acting, and their impersonators, when competent, achieve distinction; though I must confess the First Gravedigger is scarcely calculated to bring out all the best qualities of a leading comedian.

The "order system" is a subject on which not only "outsiders" are continually having their say, but occasionally one who knows and has suffered swells the cry. Now it is a well-known fact that everybody fancies he can edit a paper or manage a theatre. If the post of "adviser to a manager" were instituted, not a soul who knows the difference between the footlights and the "flys" but would consider himself the very man for the place. His first piece of advice would be, "stop all orders." People who once get an order never pay again, he argues, and so did a clever writer in a weekly journal recently. This may or may not be, but when managers are compelled to keep open large theatres for a lengthened period (and they *are*, though people who know nothing about it are apt in bad times to say "close at once," as if a theatre wasn't like a mine, where furnaces can't be put out and relighted at any moment), they do and always will find it to their interest to give very numerous free admissions at certain times; a judicious manager gives them where they are valued, and to people who will probably be pleased with the performance, and one person pleased at the play is a better advertisement than any printed puff managerial. Besides, one holder of a "pass" is apt to take a friend who pays. A little time ago an intending manager said to me: "I do not intend admitting a single order." My reply was: "You'll admit a good many *double* ones before Christmas."

From the playgoer's point of view the sight of a large theatre a fifth full is depressing—to the actor it is disheartening. "You have no more right to go into a theatre for nothing than to go into Simpson's and expect a dinner gratis" is a plausible argument, but a specious one. The eater of the dinner consumes so much fish, flesh, and fowl, which have all cost money, and if not eaten by him would be so by a paying visitor, so the transaction is a clear loss to the proprietor. The free occupier of a seat that nobody else wants to sit in stands in a different relation to the manager of the theatre altogether. The order system is in itself not the evil it is stated to be; its abuse may be so, but that is the manager's fault. There are certain houses where free admissions are seldom given; they are generally small theatres, and their success is the result of good management and good luck, and has nothing to owe to the non-order system, though people are apt to point to them as examples of its beneficial effect.

I almost feel afraid to touch upon the "National Theatre" question, for it is a subject on which many excellent well-wishers of

the stage feel strongly. It seems to me they are aiming at an impossibility. The theatre is a place of amusement, of harmless, wholesome entertainment, where eye and ear may be pleased without the slightest sense of degradation, and where one should see and hear something calculated to awaken one's sympathy for everything right, and gently stimulate one's dislike of everything wrong. But the phrase "improvement," which is being continually crammed down our throats, seems to me ill-selected and absurd. There is no reason why the player should be patted on the back by the parson. Each does his work honestly in his own walk of life, and neither wants the interference of the other. The cant about the connection of the church with the stage is rubbish. The actor requires no "patronage" from anyone. The many-headed public is his best friend, and that public, all-selfish as it is, gives him applause only when he affords it pleasure, and forgets his former triumphs when he happens to fall short of its requirements. Such an institution as a national theatre would inevitably collapse amidst heartburnings, jealousies, conflict of opinions, and general chaos. The British public and the British playgoer would look upon the national scheme as something that "ought to be supported;" but would inevitably keep away as they always do when they are told they should go anywhere to be "improved."

Altogether, I don't see that the average playgoer has much to complain of in the present state of affairs, and it is impossible to lay down hard-and-fast rules in things theatrical, as it is unfair to sweepingly denounce existing institutions. Common sense generally asserts itself in the long run, and results prove the strongest argument.

AN ESSAY IN WELSH POETRY.

By J. L. Toole.

MUCH has been said of late as to the reflex effect of acting—the intellectual and moral effect of the profession upon the actor's self. The *Spectator*, in an article upon the subject, thinks "it is simply impossible that a man gifted with the sympathies essential to an actor should be able to realize so many characters completely to himself that he can represent them to others, and make them laugh or weep with his temporary second self, without those characters exercising some effect upon his mind. Was Charles Mathews, or was he not, more of an agreeable rattle because he incessantly studied how agreeable rattles should be depicted? His biographers say that his cool, laughing *insouciance* lasted all his long life, and

sustained him under all difficulties; and it is at least possible that it was deepened by his professional assumption of the quality. The effect must be increased by the process of natural selection, which induces an actor to choose those parts which he can represent best, and with which, therefore, he must have a certain nearness of sympathy that one would think must greatly deepen the impact of their impression upon himself. Does Mr. Irving find that when he has been acting Hamlet for fifty nights the tone of his own inner mind has become more or less Hamletian? We say less because, of course, the chance of an influence of repulsion must always exist, and we can imagine an actor hating ambition more because he was every night a Richard III., or growing graver because for part of every day he was Mercutio. Liston's incessant playing of fools helped, in all human probability, to make of him the depressed Evangelical he was; and we could hardly imagine Mr. Irving less alive to the uselessness of religious formalism because he had played for seventy nights as Louis XI. Could a man act Prospero every day for a year and not acquire something, however little, of dignified serenity of mind, of the sense of the power possessed by the immaterial to rule material circumstances? Or could he be Jaques for a year and not tend to melancholy reflectiveness?"

Permit me to give you a little of my own experience on this point. Last winter I brought out a comedy by Mr. Byron, *A Fool and his Money*. In the second act, it may be remembered, the personage I represented, Chawles, takes up his residence in Wales; and in imagination, as in duty bound, I was with him there every night during the run of the play. Before long I became conscious that a great change was stealing over me. I was seized with a mania in favour of Wales and everything pertaining to that country. The sight of a Welshman now throws me into ecstacies; I really yearn towards him. The little leisure I enjoy is devoted to studies in the history, language, and literature of Wales. The number of Welsh hooks and glaives I have bought up and put in my sanctum would astound you. I cannot relish my dinner unless it includes a course of Welsh mutton; my taste for Welsh rarebits has become really alarming. Even in these tropical days I am swathed in Welsh flannel; at night I don the worsted cap known as a Welsh wig. In a word, I am more like a lineal descendant of Llewellyn than a born Englishman. But there are exceptions to this as to all other rules. With Welsh parsley I have no desire to become acquainted. There is nothing of the welsher about me, though I should be sorry to hear you say so if I were representing such a character on the stage.

The most startling proof of my Cambrian sympathies has yet to

be given. It is not enough for me to have a speaking acquaintance with a language; I must versify in it. It is not without reluctance that I say this, but the confession makes me easier in my mind. The verses which follow may be destitute of poetic inspiration, but I venture to hope that the pathetic story they set forth is told concisely and intelligibly :—

Uwch y ser hoenwych, siriol—Haul ydyw
Y gwyliedydd nefol;
Hwythau, fel gronynau 'n ol
O dano, yn gadwynol.

Pwy a faeddodd? Ah! pa foddion—gariodd
Y gwr drwy "Gaergwydion?"
I wlad yr "Haul," i dir Ion,
Yno aeth ar ei union!

Uwch, uwch wyf mewn diolch i chwi—i gyd,
Am Gadair Caerffili;
Cadair hardd coed derw yw hi,
(Am gan) yn werth pum gini.

A'i aur bwyntil y cywir baentiodd—yr "Haul,"
A'i wrid a ddesgrifiodd;
A'i ddir oleuni ddarluniodd—mewn nwyfiant,
I'w wir ogoniant ein harwr ganodd.

Efe bia lawryf bywyd—o hono
Genir Amser hefyd;
Sawyrol flodau, sieryd,
Y mab hwn yw balm y byd.

Y Lleuad wen all dywynu—hyd y nos,
Ond nawdd hwn wna'i chanu;
Heb Haul gwnai'r cread bylu,
Y Lleuad wen ai'n liw du.

Wele! dywyn "Haul" Dewi—a mawr rym,
Mor o wawl ac yni;
Rhagorodd hwn ar gewri,
Prif fanau'n planedau ni.

Hiraetha llawer, weithion—am ei well,
Un mwy bia'r Cristion;
Haul cyfiawnder, lleufer llon,
Ydyw "Haul" y duwiolion.

I wybr ein gwyl a breiniog olwg—cwyd
Prif Haul Can yn amlwg;
Ei wefr a'i dan fry ai dwg—yma'n awr
A mir ei geinwawr i "Gadair Morganwg."

Gyda'r waedd i'r Gadair hon—y codwyd
Un o'r cedyrn weithion;
Mae Essyllt a'i rymusion
Ar iawn brawf'nawr ger ein bron.

Cawr hoff "Haulwen" Caerffili—ydyw
Yr odiaeth fardd Dewi;
Am ei gan mae pum gini
I'r hen frawd ac eirian fri.

Dewi Wyn, fan hyn mewn hedd—a godwyd
I gadair anrhydedd ;
Aeth yn fwyn mewn swyn i sedd
Yr "Haulwen," a'i siriolwedd.

Yn ei Gadair enwog ydyw—y bardd,
A'i ben gwyn digyfryw ;
O mor hardd mae'r bardd yn byw,
Yn ei haeddol fri heddyw.

I *bedair* cadair y codwyd—Dewi,
Yn dawel dyrchafwyd ;
Hon o'i allu enillwyd
I'w godi 'n hyf gyda nwyd.

Here is a story on which Otway might have written a heart-moving tragedy, and Hood a poem worthy of comparison with the "Bridge of Sighs."

CHARLES MATHEWS' LAST YEARS IN LONDON.

By John Hollingshead.

ALTHOUGH Charles Mathews had been on the stage for more than forty years, he made no secret of the fact that in spite of his great and peculiar talent and his personal popularity he had not found it a very lucrative profession. His attractive power as an actor was rarely disassociated from his or Madame Vestris's theatrical speculations, and the result was, that what he made as a comedian he lost as a manager. After Madame Vestris's death he went to America, where he contracted a second marriage, and on his return to England, in conjunction with his wife, he attempted to revive the form of entertainment which his distinguished father had made popular. What were the financial results of this experiment I am not in a position to state, but he soon gave up "entertaining" and returned to the stage, accepting an engagement under the management of Mr. Benjamin Webster, and played principally at the Olympic. Then came his projected tour round the world, and the grand farewell benefit that was given to him at Covent Garden Theatre.

In 1872 I received a communication from him from America, expressing a wish to play at the Gaiety Theatre on his return to England. I replied that I should be delighted to receive him. I was in Liverpool in July, transacting some business, when I received a telegram early one morning, saying that he had arrived and wished to see me the same day at four o'clock in the afternoon to make the engagement. I came to town by a morning express train, and punctually at the appointed time he bounded into my

room, looking certainly ten years younger than he did before he left England. We wasted very little time in settling details: no agreements were drawn up, no letters asked for or given; a mere verbal contract was taken on both sides. I made a memorandum in a diary, and we both started off in different directions—Charles Mathews to Baden-Baden, and I to Vienna—the same night. We never saw, and heard very little from, each other till the beginning of October, and on the 7th of that month Charles Mathews made his re-appearance in England, after his long absence, at the Gaiety Theatre, in *A Curious Case* and *The Critic.* His reception was the most enthusiastic burst of feeling I ever witnessed or can imagine, and the one who seemed the least moved by it was the chief actor. He played for ten weeks, going through many of his favourite parts, *Used Up, Married for Money, Cool as a Cucumber, Game of Speculation,* &c., and though the bulk of the company were sent to the country, as he required very few to support him, the receipts were larger than any previously taken in the theatre—amounting to nearly £1,000 per week. This second engagement, after a long country tour, for he hated to be idle, was for five weeks in the summer of 1873, followed by five weeks in the autumn of the same year, when he played *The Liar, Patter* v. *Clatter, Used Up, Mr. Gatherwool, Married for Money,* £1,000 *a Year, Cool as a Cucumber, Aggravating Sam,* and *Little Toddlekins.* This engagement was nearly as successful as the first one.

In the December of 1873, wishing to end my first lease of the Gaiety Theatre with becoming splendour, I prevailed upon Charles Mathews to play the Hon. Tom Shuffleton in *John Bull* in combination with Mr. Phelps, Mr. Toole, Mr. Vezin, and others. He reluctantly consented, but considered that he had done himself irreparable injury as a "star" in forming an item in such a cast, though only for three nights. In the summer of 1874, after his country tour, he appeared again at the *Gaiety* for seven weeks, playing old material, *Married for Money, The Critic, Mr. Gatherwool, Used Up, The Nice Firm* (in conjunction with Mr. Arthur Cecil), *Game of Speculation, Cool as a Cucumber,* and *Patter* v. *Clatter.* This was a good engagement, but not so good as the previous ones. Charles Mathews now went to the country for more than a year, and prepared himself for his next engagement by writing a new piece, *My Awful Dad.* He made his first appearance in this piece at the Gaiety on Monday, Sept. 13, 1875, and played it, supplemented by *Mr. Gatherwool,* with immense success for eight weeks. During this engagement he was prevailed upon to overcome a strong prejudice against morning performances, and he

appeared at two *matinées* during the eight weeks, and at one special *matinée* before his departure for India. This Indian engagement was a great social if not a financial triumph, and on his return, he re-opened at the Gaiety in *My Awful Dad* and *Cool as a Cucumber* on Monday, April 17th, 1876, playing for fourteen weeks. The close of that year and the early part of 1877 he spent, as usual, working in the country, and on his return to town, finding that I could not take him in at the Gaiety owing to a season of French plays, he went to the Opera Comique, then under my management, and played for nine weeks in *My Awful Dad, The Liar, The Cosy Couple,* &c. This was his last engagement in London. On Saturday night, June 2nd, he made his last appearance on the boards of a London theatre.

The results of these eight engagements spread over six years were eminently satisfactory to both of us. The gross receipts were nearly £40,000, out of which he received more than £10,000 for playing about 354 times. Our business, what little we had, was transacted in the most pleasant manner possible. There was no fuss, no squabbling, and no agreements; he took my word and I took his, and no engagement during my ten years of management, apart from the question of profit or loss, has given me more personal gratification.

AN AMATEUR ACTOR.

By Dutton Cook.

SOME five-and-thirty years ago, a certain amateur actor made desperate efforts to win applause upon the London stage. His every essay was the occasion of riot and tumult; he was invariably received with hisses, howls, and yells of execration. He was not laughed at, for he was not a harmless, stage-stricken lunatic, of the type of "Romeo" Coates, of Highmore, or of Captain Otway; he had real claims as an actor; his thorough acquaintance with histrionic art qualified him to appear with distinction upon the scene; but his private character was absolutely detestable; he had thriven by the most odious and infamous means. The virtuous British public, which had expelled Edmund Kean from the theatre because of the injuries he had inflicted upon the absurd Alderman Cox, could not well spare so consummate a scoundrel as Mr. Barnard Gregory, editor and proprietor of the *Satirist* newspaper. Nor was the matter left altogether in the hands of the ordinary class of playgoers: there was an organised opposition to the performances of the amateur; his

enemies, who were for the most part his victims, had banded themselves together, resolved at all costs to hunt and hoot and pelt him from the stage. Vowing vengeance against their libeller, they took the law into their own hands; they would have "wild justice," if they could have no other; and it is impossible to blame them for what they did. Gregory must have been fully conscious of his own powerlessness, if not of his own villany, when he sought to play Hamlet at Covent Garden Theatre, in 1843, before an infuriated mob that would not listen to a word he said, that stood on the benches the better to mock at him, revile him, and drown his voice by their jeers, and shrieks, and roars of insult and objurgation. The leader of the opposition was well known to be a member of the Royal family, his Serene Highness the Duke of Brunswick, living here in style, a tenant of the large house encompassed by a high brick wall, nearly fronting Marylebone Church, in what is now called the Euston-road. His Highness, a mysterious, eccentric, and perhaps rather crazy personage, laced and padded into symmetry, wearing dyed hair and rouged cheeks, and noted for his enormous wealth and for his priceless collection of diamonds, was then a well-known figure in London. He had suffered much from the poisoned pen of Gregory; and, seated in a private box, attended by a group of English and foreign friends, courtiers, equerries, and lackeys, he ruled the whirlwind and directed the storm of obloquy and vituperation, calmly enjoying the discomfiture and humiliation of his foe—its object. For some time the amateur controlled his temper, seeming to await the good pleasure of his persecutors, and seeking to conciliate the house by his aspect of forbearance and respect. But it was wholly in vain. Now and then there occurred lulls in the tempest when impromptu orators in the pit or the dress circle stood up to demand: "Husbands and fathers, will you suffer the insulter of your wives and daughters to intrude his loathsome presence upon you?" or when the Hamlet of the night turned to bandy insult and invective with the Duke and his associates, or sought to address the house in a formal speech. He was not permitted to be audible. It was only known that once more —he had brought the same charge in his newspaper on previous occasions—he had denounced his Serene Highness as the assassin of Eliza Grimwood, an unfortunate woman who had been found murdered in her room in Wellington-terrace, Waterloo-road, so far back as the 26th May, 1838. There was an end, for a while, of Mr. Gregory's endeavours to obtain recognition as an actor.

It may be necessary to explain, perhaps, that the *Age* newspaper, and the *Satirist*, which followed it, and was, indeed, only the *Age* newspaper under a new name, carried on a system of libel and

extortion. They obtained the support of the readers delighting in scandal and calumny, no matter how disgraceful or disgusting, and further, they prospered by levying black mail upon those who dreaded exposure or slander. The libels were often sent in manuscript to the persons concerned, accompanied by notice that publication would promptly ensue unless a considerable price was paid for suppression of the defamation. The weak yielded to this threat and were often plundered accordingly of large amounts; the strong resisted, were consequently libelled, and sought to punish their assailant in a court of law. The legal remedy was expensive, however, and not always efficacious. Four indictments of the *Age* newspaper—one arising out of a shameful libel upon the well-known Thomas Raikes—all failed one fine morning in the Court of Queen's Bench, in part owing to the eloquence of Henry Brougham, and in part because of the leniency of the juries of that time in relation to libels. But in 1839, Barnard Gregory had been found guilty of libel on a lady whom he had accused of bigamy and other offences, and he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. In 1843, he was convicted of a series of libels upon the Duke of Brunswick, charging him with the murder of Eliza Grimwood; and about the same time, in the Court of Common Pleas, the jury returned a verdict in favour of the Duke of Brunswick and others, accused of conspiracy in that they had hired people to hiss Gregory on the occasion of his appearance as an actor at Covent Garden. There was, usually, no sort of warrant for the libels of the *Age* and *Satirist;* they were shameless lies, simply. The murder of Eliza Grimwood was one of those sensational tragedies which sometimes greatly excite the town; it was, as it remains, a case of undiscovered crime. The murderer was believed to be a foreigner, but the police failed to arrest the suspected man. The Duke's only connection with the crime arose from a rumour, found afterwards to be groundless, that a pair of gloves which had once belonged to him had been found in the dead woman's chamber. Those curious in the matter may read in one of the "Reprinted Pages" of Charles Dickens, relating his interviews with certain members of the detective police, the story of the gloves found in Eliza Grimwood's room. They really furnished no clue to her assassin.

Gregory made a later attempt to appear as Hamlet at the Haymarket Theatre, in August, 1846. The regular season had terminated; a Mr. Davidson had engaged the house for a short season; Gregory was announced to play a round of Shaksperean characters. But the old systematic rioting was renewed; again the actor was driven from the stage. He continued his efforts for several evenings, but the spectators scarcely abated their uproar. At length Mr.

Benjamin Webster, the lessee of the theatre, interfered and ejected his tenants, lest his property should suffer serious injury from the indignation of the public. Gregory and his company, which consisted chiefly of amateurs, removed to the Strand Theatre, then in a very obscure and unprosperous condition. Apparently it was not thought worth while to molest him much at the Strand. I find by a newspaper of the time that he played there several characters, among them Falstaff in the first part of *Henry IV.* But Shakspere at the Strand Theatre, in the month of August, was not likely to attract large or enthusiastic audiences. The amateur did not greatly attract the public.

I was not present either at Covent Garden or the Haymarket when Gregory was hissed and hooted at. I had an opportunity of seeing him, however, upon one occasion, at the St. James's Theatre, engaged for a special performance by a club of amateurs, calling themselves the Shakspereans, I think. The play was *The Iron Chest:* Gregory was, of course, the Sir Edward Mortimer of the night. My opinion of the representation is, I need hardly say, of very trifling value. I was at the time a small person in a schoolboy's jacket, with a turned-over linen collar of large dimensions. I knew nothing, happily, of the *Age* or the *Satirist*, or of the infamy of Gregory; I had never heard of him before. To me he seemed a very fine performer; and this was the opinion, I found, of really competent critics, who, holding the man in detestation, could yet recognise fully his merits as an actor. My father, I recollect—a theatrical Tory, a devout admirer of John Kemble and Charles Young, maintaining Edmund Kean to be, if brilliant, certainly wrong—was yet willing to concede the singular histrionic capacity of Barnard Gregory. For my part I was completely carried away by the force and passion of the actor. I was an immature and incapable judge, no doubt; nevertheless I had seen Macready and Charles Kean, and was thus provided with a standard by which to test, after a fashion, the gravity of this Sir Edward Mortimer. I have forgotten many performers and performances that have appeared or occurred in the interval, but I still retain a lively recollection of that representation of *The Iron Chest.* It was said that Gregory was a follower or imitator of Edmund Kean. He possessed a fine, strong, sonorous voice, something hoarse, perhaps, in its lower tones. His features were irregular, yet expressive, his eyes fine and piercing. He was, I think, below the middle stature, and of robust form; but his appearance altogether in his Vandyke dress of puce velvet or fine cloth, with his pale face and iron-gray hair, moustache, and beard—he was carefully made up—was most picturesque. *The Iron Chest* is rather a dull play, perhaps, but it contains two or three highly effective scenes. The part of

Sir Edward affords the actor valuable opportunities for the display of conflicting emotions, anger, scorn, pity, fear, shame, remorse, and frenzied despair. I know that Gregory, by his elocutionary skill, the vehemence of his delivery, the passionate abandonment of his manner, roused his audience to extraordinary enthusiasm. He had no enemies in the house that night. He towered above his associates on the stage. He seemed a genuine actor of the first class, though but amateur. I remember the audience laughing at certain of the performers, particularly at the representative of Armstrong, the robber captive, who had difficulty in pronouncing the letter *r*. The musical embellishments of the drama were omitted, I think, except in regard to Samson's comic song, "A traveller stopt at a widow's gate."

After 1846 Gregory made no further efforts to figure upon the public stage; indeed, he did not long survive. He was dead when the "Recollections" of the Rev. J. Richardson, formerly connected with *The Times* newspaper, were published in 1856. Richardson discourses freely of Gregory, crediting him with the possession of "gentlemanly and retiring manners," "fund of anecdote," and "amusing powers of conversation." The *Satirist* was suppressed at last, in Gregory's lifetime, by the force of public opinion, aided by incessant recourse to the law-courts. Still Gregory had prospered. He acquired considerable wealth under the will of an eccentric person known as "Memory Thompson," a retired "brewer's valuer." Litigation ensued; there was some question of undue influence, and a later will was propounded. Gregory compromised the matter, however, by marrying the lady who, failing his own claim, became legally entitled beyond question to "Memory Thompson's" money.

THEOPHILUS CIBBER *v.* GARRICK.

By L. F. Austin.

IN the general preface to his novels, the author of *Lothair* alludes to the critics who had severely handled that work as people "who hope by libelling some eminent personage of their time to descend to posterity;" and not obscurely hints that the race of the Dennises, the Oldmixons, and the Curlls is not extinct. That this reprobation is very far from just need hardly be pointed out. The general character of criticism supports the assertion that the majority

of writers habitually judge an author's works on their merits. But a hundred and thirty years ago this was not the case. People did not criticise; they gossipped. Critics were usually either panegyrists or defamers, according to circumstances. Garrick came in for a larger share of their defamation than their praise. Either enraged by his success, irritated by his vanity, or smarting under his disdain, they attacked him with unsparing violence.

Conspicuous amongst these gentry was Mr. Theophilus Cibber, the son of a clever actor who attempted to improve Shakspere and was made Poet Laureate because he was no poet. Theophilus had excellent opportunities of pursuing a tolerably creditable career, but wasted them all. It is recorded that Colley, taking the air one day, encountered his hopeful offspring, who was superbly attired. Cibber, knowing that Theophilus was penniless, surveyed him with contempt. "I pity you, sir!" he said. "Better pity my tailor!" was the reply. Theophilus was at least consistent. He conducted all his affairs on "pity my tailor" principles. This theory of life involved him in perpetual embarrassments, but he lost nothing of his native audacity. He had talents, and amongst them was a capacity for abusive rhetoric, which was carefully cultivated. But the enterprise which established his fame was his attempt to obtain five thousand pounds for damages to his injured honour as a husband. The jury, having reason to believe that he had been a party to the intrigue, awarded him ten pounds. This sum did not enable him to satisfy his creditors, and he spent some little time in prison. From this point he pursued his profession as an actor under increasing difficulties. As Mrs. Cibber had become a popular favourite, the public was incensed against Theophilus, who accordingly had few opportunities of exhibiting his person on the stage. Worse than this, he was always jeopardising the sovereign privileges of patentees by endeavouring to open a theatre and form a company of his own. His father, who continued to move in the best society, made no effort to mitigate the penalties under which his son was suffering. In an affecting petition to the nobility, Theophilus claimed their consideration on the ground that his parent had "for many years enjoyed the honour of laughing with them in their social hours of private pleasures." But, naturally, the nobility did not see that because Mr. Colley Cibber amused them after dinner, they were bound to extend their patronage to his scapegrace son. Deprived of all hope of employment in London, Theophilus managed to obtain an engagement at Dublin. The vessel in which he embarked was lost in a gale, and he was never seen or heard of again.

In 1755 Theophilus Cibber, having been summarily discharged from Covent Garden, proceeded to carry a favourite project of his

into effect. He would be, as he once before had been, his own manager. He obtained a temporary licence from the Duke of Grafton to open the theatre in the Haymarket; but after he had played for about ten nights the licence was withdrawn. He appealed to the Duke to restore it, remarking in effect that if his Grace did so he would be entitled to take rank with the Creator.

> So, when the world was wrapt in night,
> "Be it light," said heaven, and all was light.

The Duke, evidently perceiving that the patronage of such a man as Cibber was attended with some risk, did not deign to reply. Theophilus immediately declared war against the theatrical monopolists, to whose influence he attributed his misfortune. He represented himself as the champion of a just cause defeated by despots. But it was upon Garrick that the weight of his indignation chiefly fell. He published an "Epistle" to that gentleman. Was it not hard, he said, that he, "the son of an *Englishman,*" should be "obstructed in his honest views" by "the son of a *Frenchman,* who, not content with having amassed a princely fortune, is still jealous a shilling should be added to a poor man's purse, lest his coffers should not sufficiently run over?" Garrick's generosity is attested by numberless acts of kindness, often to people who deserved no consideration at his hands; but let that pass. Then Theophilus hinted not obscurely that Garrick was afraid to engage him, lest his powers should threaten the supremacy of Roscius. He also observed that he might appeal to the law; but that "time had taught him to stifle private resentment, however justifiable, where the quiet or entertainment of the public was concerned." Seeing that the public had for many years treated him with scant favour, this consideration for their convenience was most magnanimous.

The epistle having had no effect, Theophilus determined to favour the public with his views on Garrick in a course of lectures at the Haymarket. These he advertised as "Dissertations on the Theatres," and their professed object was to review the history of the stage from the earliest times, and to examine its existing condition. Had not patentees and players, he asked, joined in laying "a foundation for a false, disgraceful taste?" He regretted that so deficient an orator should have been left to undertake the task of rousing the public to demand a reformation of the stage. He was not prompted by envy or malice; it was "the abuse of power," the wrongs of "men of genius," which inspired his wrath. The only remedy for these evils was to impeach "the present Grand Director." When Garrick opened Drury Lane he declared that it would be the fault of the

public if anything but the legitimate drama were performed under his management. "How has he kept his word?" asked Cibber, triumphantly. "By patchwork, pantomimes, masking mummeries, and the larger kind of puppet-shows." But in this volley of invective one important consideration was forgotten. Garrick had been taught by experience that they who live to please must please to live. What he did for the stage must be judged as a whole, and the verdict pronounced must be in his favour. As Theophilus proceeded with his lecture he warmed to his subject. "Garrick," he said, was "a pilfering pedlar in poetry," "a tricking vintner," "a mongrel pigmy of Parnassus," "a charlatan," "a little Jack-a-Dandy." He could never act without taking "the farcical liberties of a harlequin." Then, "influenced by a sense of duty," Cibber inveighed against the actor's "studied tricks," overfondness for extravagant attitudes, frequent affected starts, convulsive twitchings, jerkings of the body, sprawling of the fingers, flapping the breast and pockets, unnatural pauses in the middle of the sentence, forced conceits, wilful neglect of harmony, even when the round period of a well-expressed noble sentiment demands a graceful cadence in the delivery. Here Garrick's well-known mannerisms are deliberately exaggerated. However, criticism of this kind has but little weight, though even in our own days it is favoured by one or two dramatic critics who, if they were capable of anything better, might exercise considerable influence. "Whatever wants there may be in a performer," Cibber continued, "which are the defects of nature, cannot be too tenderly touched," but for all that he frequently ridiculed Garrick on account of his diminutive stature. The criticism of Garrick's impersonations was all pitched in the same key. Most observers agree that Ranger was one of his most delightful performances, but according to Theophilus it was merely a sample of "bad manners." As Don John, in *The Chances*, Garrick was "a pert prig let loose on a holiday," who seemed to say, "If I can't rise to Don John, I 'll bring Don John down to me." His Richard III. was a mass of "buffoonery." It is very probable that some of Cibber's strictures were not devoid of truth, but the spirit of malignant exaggeration which pervades them deprives them of all value. Garrick's mimicry of the older actors in the first flush of his triumph at Goodman's Fields was the subject of stern denunciation. Unquestionably the conduct of the actor in that respect was in the worst taste, but as Cibber had set the example, it was not for him to wield the rod. He was at a similar disadvantage when he attacked Garrick for having mutilated Shakspere. The charge was just, but Garrick had not so much to answer for on this head as his censor's father, who had reduced one of Shakspere's greatest characters to the intellectual level of every mouthing

stroller, or even of the censor himself, who had tampered with *Henry VI.* and *Romeo and Juliet.*

In the second of these precious "dissertations," Theophilus took advantage of the frenzy of the mob against Garrick for having introduced French dancers at a time when war was imminent between France and England. Garrick's explanation was that the contract with these people had been signed a year before their appearance, and that they were Swiss Protestants. This, of course, did not appease the populace, whose ignorant prejudice against foreigners it is never very difficult to excite. The character of Cibber's eloquence may be easily conceived. He began in this style:—"Friends, Britons, countrymen, lend me your ears," which sounds sarcastic. The "Anti-Gallicans" had diffused "a noble patriot spirit through the nation," and then, by way of showing that, though an actor, he had carefully studied public affairs, he passed a poetical eulogy on the commerce of England. Here is a remarkable couplet:—

> Look ages back, our happiest kings must own
> Traffick the brightest jewel of their crown!

A dubious compliment to some of our monarchs—Charles II., for example. Theophilus next indulged in a piece of pleasantry, which he entitled "Mock Roscius brought to his Trial in the Shades." Garrick was described as obtaining an audience of Shakspere, who upbraided him in unmeasured language. The unhappy actor then proceeds to give a specimen of his acting, but utterly disgusts the assembly by his "paralytic pauses," "fluttering stammers," "sudden darts of his right hand to his left breast, as if bitten there by a flea," and other grievous defects.

As for Garrick, we need scarcely affirm that his good name remains untarnished by the libels of such scribes as Theophilus Cibber. He had many faults, but they were all superficial. Small vanities, harmless finessing in society, rash impulses, almost make up the sum of his failings. Envy, malice, and uncharitableness were foreign to his nature; and not the least part of his greatness consists in the fact that, whatever his errors, he always showed his moral superiority to those who misrepresented or maligned him.

"BASHFUL FIFTEEN."

By Gerald Dixon.

YES, that was her age when I first met her seven years ago. She is a famous actress now, and exactly twenty-two.

Having passed three pleasant years at Cambridge, and become a Bachelor of Arts by the least irksome process permitted by University Statutes, I found myself at twenty-one years of age a student at the Upper Temple, and the monthly tenant of a couple of rooms on the first floor in Guildford-street, Russell-square. As I knew few people in London, and was not even a member of one of the University clubs, there was no special reason for idleness, and I may proudly confess that for the first three months of my residence in town, my jealous mistress, the law, knew no rival.

But even the stirring period of "Mr. Joshua Williams on Real Property," and the sportive facetiousness of "Mr. Justice Byles on Bills," are apt to become monotonous, and I was on the point of joining a small Bohemian club in the Strand, when fate brought me distraction from my studies in a more witching and material shape. This shape was an ankle.

Of course it was feminine; equally of course it was trim and dainty. The first time I saw it a crimson stocking added to its allurements; on the second occasion it was clad in black. And oddly enough this was the only evidence I had of the propinquity of a young and attractive neighbour, for the ankle was always helping its owner up stairs at a rapid rate, whenever I caught a glimpse of that ravishing joint and the flutter of the dress which accompanied it.

At length, after sundry stray glimpses, my curiosity was fairly aroused, and I inquired of my landlady regarding the occupants of the rooms above me. "Yes, Sir, the second floor, Sir, which it's a young woman and her grandmar, and well be'aved and quite respectable, though she is a play actress, Sir."

"A play actress?" I exclaimed; "which—the young woman or the grandmother?"

"Oh, the young woman, Sir, which she is *that* devoted to her grandmar, and quite haffable, as one may say. They have been here ten days, and they 've conducted themselves quite proper."

I must confess that the fact of the owner of the ankle being an actress inflamed my interest in it to an inordinate degree. I am naturally gregarious, and I am fond of my species, and during the

last three months the only women I had spoken to were the worthy Mrs. Jones, my landlady, and the much-begrimed domestic who attended to the requirements of the lodgers. Then, like many young men of similar age, I had an affection for the drama and the stage, an affection, I may add, which, though whetted by curiosity, was still tempered with respect. Of course, I could not force an acquaintance with the "second-floor," and I was far too inexperienced in the customs of the metropolis to introduce myself in an apparently natural and unpremeditated manner.

One Sunday morning after breakfast I was stretched on my uncomfortable sofa, smoking a long pipe and reading one of the late lamented Mr. Smith's "leading cases." I was doing my best to feel interested in the details when I was conscious of a commotion upstairs. A minute or so afterwards a rap came on my door.

"Come in," I cried, and Mrs. Jones appeared. She was sorry to disturb me, but the old lady upstairs was "took" suddenly ill; no restoratives were at hand, and according to law, none were procurable at that time on the Sabbath. Would I therefore be kind enough to lend her a wineglass-full?

The application was evidently genuine, but, on Mrs. Jones's part, hasty and ill-considered, revealing as it did an intimate knowledge of the resources of my cupboard. Still, what I had was, of course, at the service of the second-floor.

Pulling open the door still wider to allow my landlady to depart, I perceived on the stairs in front of me the figure of a young and beautiful girl. She was standing expectant, one hand resting on the banister, and when she met my admiring eyes she flushed slightly. She was tall and well-made, her slight girlish figure giving indications of future robustness. A mass of nut-brown hair, most heterodoxically picturesque, fell round and about her shapely head, and a pair of full grey eyes sparkled somewhat defiantly from under the corresponding number of light eyebrows.

"It's all right, Miss!" quoth the landlady unctuously; "Mr. Smith have been kind enough to lend us this;" and the good soul hugged the unsympathetic bottle to her matronly bosom.

The girl stepped down two or three stairs. "I'm sorry for troubling you," she said to me, "but we didn't know what to do, and—after all I suppose we are not the first people who have made each other's acquaintance over the bottle."

And then she turned and tripped lightly upstairs, and a flash of the crimson ankle was perceptible as she turned the corner of the staircase.

There was a certain *abandon* in her movements which was at once attractive and strange. Her manner and utterance were easy,

and her tone seemed to imply a thorough mastery of the situation, and a hint that, though she was young, she was experienced and was intimately acquainted "with her way about."

Later on in the afternoon, I was again reclining on the inhospitable horse-hair, and was aroused by another knock at my door. This time the summons was not so much an authoritative rap as a soft and insinuating tap. I bade my visitor enter, and the door was opened a few inches.

"Mr. Smith, I have brought you back the—the *medicine*." Of course I opened the door wide, and begged the young lady to come in, which she did unconcernedly enough, and placed the bottle on the sideboard.

"I hear you are a lawyer, Mr. Smith," said she, glancing round the room.

"Not yet, I'm only at the bar," I returned modestly.

"But I suppose you are awfully clever, and all that," she added simply. "Anyhow, you are very kind."

"Oh! don't talk like that, please. And you, I hear, are an actress."

"I don't know," and she looked quite pensive; "*I am on the stage.*"

"It must be a very jolly life," I suggested somewhat nervously, for I had never spoken to an actress before, remember.

"It is a very hard life," said she.

"But you cannot have much experience," I returned, glancing at her youthful figure.

"I began when I was twelve, and I am now fifteen. I have played Arthur in *King John*, Mamillius in the *Winter's Tale*, and Prince Bright Eyes in the pantomime. Quite a wide range of parts, isn't it?"

"Yes, I suppose so," I remarked; "and may I ask where you are acting now?"

She laughed. "Such is fame! Why, I am playing in the new burlesque at the Fortune."

I apologised for my ignorance, and assured her that I would go and see her on the following night.

"Do," said she, "and mind you applaud my song; I was encored last night, so contrive that I am again to-morrow. Good-bye," she continued, moving towards the door, "I never talked to a lawyer before."

"And I have never spoken to an actress until to-day," quoth I.

"How do you like it?" asked she.

"Immensely; pray give me another opportunity. What do *you* think of a lawyer?"

"I don't think of him at all just at present; I have something better to do," and with that she vanished.

Yes, she was both piquante and repelling, but the novelty of the acquaintance was pleasing, and the next evening found me seated in a stall at the Theatre Royal Fortune.

The performance was dull and insipid. Perversions and contortions of the Queen's English in the shape of puns never inspired me with any profound sense of the educational use of the drama, and I was then neither young enough nor old enough to appreciate an exhibition of shapely limbs, painted faces, and tresses of an impossible hue. Still I applauded Miss Minnie May's song, and was somewhat disappointed that she never bestowed upon me so much as a glance of recognition. I went back to my rooms immediately after the curtain fell, and prepared for a couple of hours' spell at "Taylor on Evidence." I had been seated at my table but a few minutes when a light tap sounded at my door. I opened it, and there was Miss Minnie May.

"Well, said she impatiently, "how did you like it? How did it *go?*"

"I don't know much about burlesques, Miss May, but the audience seemed amused."

"Yes, they encored my song. I have made a hit, I feel certain. You didn't applaud though, I was watching you."

"Indeed I did; I split my gloves over it. Look here," and I showed her circumstantial evidence of my zeal.

"Oh, I dare say; you split them applauding somebody else; that fright that plays Prince Camaralzaman with the padded legs."

"No; I agree with you that she *is* a fright. I didn't applaud her."

"Mind you never do. She is a wretch. And now I shall expect you to come to the Fortune at least three days a week. It will do you good; you spend far too much time over these abominable books." And then she asked me demurely whether I wouldn't go upstairs and be introduced to grandmamma, who was anxious to thank me for my prompt sympathy of the previous day. "You won't be *too* shocked, I suppose," she laughed, as I followed her upstairs.

Grandmamma was a faded old lady dressed in black, and her conversation generally resolved itself into uninteresting reminiscences of bygone triumphs. For she had been the darling of provincial theatres years ago, poor old soul, and lived as comfortably as she could on recollections of the past and a pittance of the present.

We had a cheerful little supper of poached eggs and bottled

stout. Miss Minnie prattled away, grandmamma was silently appreciative, and I listened and learnt. Afterwards, Minnie showed me her album and her aged relative showed symptoms of impending sleep in her arm-chair. I admired the photographs as well as I knew how.

"But you haven't told me what you think of my acting," she exclaimed suddenly.

"Haven't I? well, you are young yet. Are you sure that you like the stage?" For to tell the truth Miss Minnie May had not inspired me with any belief in her histrionic genius.

"Like the stage?" she enquired surprised; "why I'm a born actress. Oh! you don't think so?"

I modestly deprecated any such idea.

"Never mind, Mr. Smith, before many months are over I'll prove to you that I can act. Not an actress, indeed! And the impetuous young damsel seemed ready to cry. Presently I came to the last page of the album, and my eye caught a portrait of a girl whom I took for herself.

"Oh! that is not like you," I exclaimed.

"Who said it was?" Then she paused and laughed softly to herself. "That is a portrait of my sister."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, we are very much alike."

"Is she an actress, too?"

"She is on the stage. And now good night; don't sit up and read law. Go to sleep and dream of ——"

"Prince Camaralzaman?"

"By all means, if you *can*."

For the next five or six days I saw but little of Miss Minnie May. In fact I rather avoided her. As I was absent all day in the chambers of a special pleader, I ran no chance of encountering this "maiden of bashful fifteen" in broad daylight, and at night about the time she usually came home from the theatre I made a practice of smoking a cigar and sauntering round Russell-square. However, on Sunday morning she tapped at my door. I received her ceremoniously.

"Don't try and act, Mr. Smith," said she, quickly perceiving my awkwardness; "leave that to me; I'm come to say good-bye."

"Good-bye?"

"Yes; I have got a better engagement in Liverpool; more money and a comedy part. You see there are *some* people who believe in my acting."

"My dear Miss May, pray don't think I undervalue your talents——"

"I wanted to tell you that my sister is coming up from Glasgow to take my part in the burlesque at the Fortune. My sister, you saw her photograph the other evening. She isn't a bit like me, except in appearance; and I want you to be kind to her, and, if I may venture to ask a favour, to see her home from the theatre the first two or three nights. She is rather timid, you know, and doesn't know her way about as I do."

The request astonished me slightly, but of course I could only promise to do what was required.

"And what are you going to do to-night?" she asked.

"I have promised to dine at Richmond with some friends. I go down in the afternoon, and shall not return till about twelve."

"Oh! very well. I start by the night train, and Mildred arrives about ten. Good-bye, Mr. Smith; when we meet again I hope to be able to convince you that I *am* an actress."

I dined at the Star and Garter that evening, and spent a few merry hours with some old college friends, and returned home about midnight. When I reached my landing I found the begrimed domestic and a young girl endeavouring to carry a heavy box upstairs. Of course, I offered my services, which were gracefully accepted. The lady, who was, of course, Miss Mildred May, let go the handle of the trunk, which I promptly grasped and dragged up to the sitting-room above. As I was leaving the apartment, she entered.

"Miss Mildred May, I presume?" I asked, bowing. She bowed a mute acknowledgment and passed into the room. I looked at her somewhat curiously, and not without admiration. Her figure was more womanly than her sister's and her costume was plainer. There was an air of almost matronly dignity about her as she moved. Her hair was dressed plainly, and I noticed that, unlike her sister, she wore no rings on her well-shaped hand. When she turned her full-face to me, I was struck with its sweet composure, and the perfect arches formed by her dark eyebrows. Her sister had no eyebrows worth mentioning.

She thanked me in a few appropriate words for my kind offices, and I withdrew.

But not to rest. Mildred, like Macbeth, had murdered sleep, and I tossed vainly on my pillow. What was it about the girl that attracted me? I asked myself. She had uttered but a few words, yet there was a soft confiding look in her grey eyes, a sympathetic motion of her hands, which, without being conspicuous, were inexpressibly tender. That girl an actress! I thought. By Jove, she ought to be the wife of an archbishop.

In the morning I left a short note, telling her of the promise I had made her sister of attending her home from the theatre. Then

I strolled down to King's Bench Walk, and began drawing a "declaration in tort," but even with Bullen and Leake's assistance, I hesitated and blundered. It was no good, I could not work, so I left chambers, and found myself walking towards Guilford-street. As I reached my door, she came out. Heavens! How my heart leaped!

She was going for a short walk. She did not know where; she had only been in London once before; so she accepted my guidance, and we strolled away.

I shall never forget that afternoon as long as I live. Mildred said little, and my conversation was commonplace in the extreme. With Minnie, I could rattle on and pay compliments, and laugh and feel not a whit embarrassed. But—with Mildred!

I saw her home from the theatre that night, but did not sit in the stalls to watch her play her sister's part. I hated the notion that so gentle a creature should be compelled to exhibit herself on the stage, and I know I should have writhed in agony at the spectacle. As I escorted her home, her left hand softly placed on my right fore-arm, she thanked me for my consideration.

"I am glad you did not come, Mr. Smith; I meant to have asked you not. I am not a born actress, like Minnie, but of course we must live."

Yes, I thought to myself, poor child, she must live; and then the thought arose from my heart and dazzled my brain—how sweet, how inspiring to work for this dear girl, to soften and make straight her life's pathway, to persuade her to ennoble and beautify my own!

During the following week King's Bench Walk saw but little of me. Mildred looked pale and needed fresh air, and I determined that the evil effects of the footlights should be remedied by plenty of sunshine by day. We explored the suburbs of London. We trod Hampstead Heath together, explored the recesses of Richmond Park, fed the deer in Bushey and the bears in the Zoo. Every day seemed to bring forth some fresh beauty of her mind; every day made me more passionately in love. So, devoted and reckless, I told her one Sunday morning, after we had been to church at the Foundling Hospital, that I couldn't live without her.

"My darling, I am not rich in worldly goods, but I have a wealth of love for you. Quit your irksome calling, be my wife."

As I covered her hand with kisses, she rose suddenly.

"Mr. Smith, are you not afraid to marry an actress?"

"You are an angel," I cried. "You are *not* an actress."

Then she laughed merrily.

"So you told me before," and with a swift turn towards the

looking-glass, she shook her hair out of its orthodox coil. Then she laughed more than ever.

"Mildred!" I cried in amazement.

"Mildred?" she answered, mockingly; "Mildred? There isn't such a person. I'm Minnie May, and I never had a sister to my own knowledge. Well," she added, seating herself on the table, "am I an actress or not, Mr. Smith?"

I never answered her, but rushed out of the house, and the next day moved into fresh lodgings at Brixton.

Since then I have had frequent opportunities of measuring her capacities as an actress. In fact, I am going to see her play *Lady Teazle* to-night. She occasionally sends me a box, for old acquaintance sake, as she puts it.

ONLY FANCY!

By Henry S. Leigh.

Tell me, great Apollo, tell me—*am* I born to future fame?—
Low, I grant it, is my stature; vulgar, doubtless, is my name.
(As for birth and education, even while a tiny kid
I could say at least my letters—and my parents *never* did).—
Visions haunt me in my slumber, dreams of higher, brighter things;
Mighty throbbings of ambition, weird and wild imaginings.
Tell, oh, tell me, stars above us;—evermore shall I remain
Tenant of a menial office—only call-boy at the "Lane?"

I've performed *Othello, Romeo, Hamlet, Richard,* all the lot.
I've performed the *Stranger* also; everything, no matter what!
True, 'twas in my sleep I did it; yet, unless I much mistake,
I should see my way to do it even better wide awake.
Only place the parts before me; let my lines be written down;
Give me just a month for study; and I paralyse the town!
Hush, my giddy heart, be quiet! Hush, be still, my giddy brain!
Hath not Fortune in her malice made me call-boy at the "Lane?"

As a bashful young beginner I would fill the lowest sphere;
I would bear aloft a banner, might I only once appear.
I should thrill the house, I know it—were I favoured by the Fates—
Though the simple words I uttered were, "My lord, the carriage waits!"
Yes—my figure *may* be puny; still, by credible report,
Edmund Kean was but a pigmy—Garrick was absurdly short.
Altitudes the most prodigious talent always can attain;—
There are heaps of hidden talent in the call-boy at the "Lane."

When my pow'rs were all developed, all my knowledge of the stage,
I could write a play, I fancy, worthy of the present age.
I could vanquish in a canter all the dramatists alive—
No *three-acted* adaptation, but a comedy in *five.*
Sheridan should be my model. Could I fail to make a hit?
Mr. Grumps, the heavy father, tells me I 've a ready wit.
Stalls and gallery, pit and boxes, would in one united strain
Sing deservedly the praises of the call-boy at the "Lane."

Have my dreams of glory vanished? Hath my gorgeous vision flown?
Doth deceitful Fancy leave me, gloomy, hopeless, all alone?
Yes; 'twill soon be time to open. Yes; the hour will soon be here
When the second low-comedian sternly sends me forth for beer.
Carpenters will scowl upon me. Grimy slaves who shift the scenes
Will deride me, little knowing what poetic fervour means.
All my hopes are broken bubbles, all my sunny schemes are vain.
I resume the proud position of the call-boy at the "Lane!"

The Day Will Come.

A NOVELETTE IN THREE PARTS.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

I.—My Story.
II.—His Story.
III.—Our Story.

PART II.

His Story.—He is born and criticised—The curse of drink—A pretty, weak woman—Boyish memories—The circus—An empty room—Death tokens—A funeral—Meggie disappears—A legacy of vengeance—The shadows of coming events.

HE sat quietly smoking for nearly an hour after the discovery which closed my story. Now and then he smiled, in a sad, regretful, kind of way. He pushed the whisky bottle from him when I suggested that a nip would do him no harm. "I've done with liquor," he said, "I shall drink no more until I have met your friend." He walked to the door of the hut, and back again. Presently, laying down his pipe, and looking earnestly at me, he said, "Partner, I am going to tell you everything from the very beginning. I can talk of her, now that I know she's dead—my mother I mean. As we are to be brothers, you ought to know me from the day of my birth, and you shall." I begged him not to consider me in anything he was going to relate. He only replied that he hoped I would not interrupt him. It would do him good he said to look back upon the track of his life.

This is his strange and pitiful story :—

"What an ugly little rascal!" my father exclaimed in answer to the "There, sir!" of the nurse who held me like a bundle under his nose, "what an ugly beggar!"

"Lor sir!" said the woman, "for goodness' sake don't say that to missus; she'll never get over it."

But my father had no delicate scruples on that score; so my mother told me when she related this incident of my birth to me in after years. He repeated the criticism in her presence; though I have since had reason to believe that he did so in a genial way that had no offence in it.

"However," said my mother, "you soon grew pretty enough

for your father to make a fuss about you." She always said that I was a handsome lad, but women are vain about their youngsters; it is human nature to be so I expect. "You were cross enough, nevertheless," she added, "and I shall never forget travelling with you from Southtown, by coach, to Elmsfield; I believe you cried all those three or four hundred miles, whatever the distance was."

"I guess," said I, "that I must have had some idea of the wretched character of the hole we were going to," thrusting my hands into a pair of velveteen trousers, and frowning my contempt upon Elmsfield from the height of nine years. I look back now and see myself standing by my mother's side; heaven forgive her, I can't, though she is dead and gone!"

"I only wish I had never seen Elmsfield, or your father either, for that matter," she said. "To be married at seventeen, and taken away from your father and mother, never to see them again, isn't that enough to make a woman miserable?"

"Have you never seen them since?" I asked.

"No, and never shall," she said; "and your father that proud and independent, it makes me cry with vexation to think of it. Your grandfather Mills would have sent us all the way in his own waggon, and with a good supply of furniture and linen, but your father said, 'No, I married her for love, and I will not have a penny with her one way or the other.' That would have been all very well if your father had been rich; but we hadn't a ten-pound note between us, and if it hadn't been for a little purse of gold which your grandmother slipped into my hand just before the coach started, I don't know what we should have done; and we coming away all these miles, and the snow falling the whole way. Your father had gone on a week before to get lodgings for us, and what with your crying and the cold, and feeling lonely, I never spent two such unhappy days in my life."

The room in which me and my mother were talking—me, that little chap in velvet trousers, she as pretty a woman, I might say girl, as you could find, search the world over—I can see the little place as if I was looking into it now—it was a sort of parlour-kitchen. The furniture consisted of a deal table and dresser, a chintz-covered sofa, two arm-chairs, a piece of carpet covering the centre of the room, a black-leaded fireplace, and a baby's cradle, completely furnished with baby and pillow, and which said cradle my mother rocked with her small left foot as she talked; while I, her son and heir, stood by, a delighted auditor of her gossip and complaint.

"And how old was I when you brought me to Elmsfield, mother?"

"Twelve months," she replied, as she stood up to look at the clock on the mantelshelf.

"And what made you come to Elmsfield?"

"Ah, you may well ask that," she replied, "when we had a good house at Southtown, where your father was doing well, and your grandfather never missed a day without sending us something. What is it that makes people rush upon their own destruction, I wonder? It was just his getting to be an overseer, from having only before been a journeyman, I suppose, that made your father come here; and when he arrived he found he had got the engagement all through a strike, and they called him names, and wrote verses upon him, and in the song there was something about our burning a pig up the chimney; for you see your father, he is so obstinate, he will insist upon doing things here as they do them at Southtown. They cure their bacon there by drying it over a wood fire, and your father had a flitch put up the kitchen chimney to smoke it, but the thing nearly burnt the house down; and so they put it into a song, and I could have cried my eyes out when some one threw a copy in at the door."

"Are we rich, mother?"

"Rich! I should think not, indeed."

"Shall we be rich some day?"

"Your father says so; but I very much doubt it. I never heard of a Newbolde who was rich yet. Your father talks of his blood, and the great Newboldes there have been in past days, though what the good of that is I could never make out."

A comely dark woman my mother was, and I can see her now, rocking my little sister Meg. When I think of what I have gone through since then, it is a wonder to me how I remember those early days so well. It was an old-fashioned cradle that in which little Meg and me were rocked, and in my manhood Dame Fortune hasn't given me much in the way of soft cushions. But I could have them now if I wanted them, and everything else that money can buy. Hard fare 's a good thing to train a man on; though, mind you, I should be sorry for a son of mine, if I had one, to be launched compassless and rudderless on the ocean of life, as I was. You can readily judge that my mother was not the sort of woman to fortify her son with moral courage; and as for my father, well he had enough to do to keep the pot boiling, as he used to say, without bothering his head about anything else, though he loved us children with a man's heart. But to go back to that conversation with my mother; I remember that we were just discussing the point about our worldly means, and I was wondering

why some good fairy didn't come and help us, when the door was suddenly opened, and in rolled a hat.

"Ah! there he is again," exclaimed my mother, "tipsy twice this week."

"Whoever shall this hat displace, must meet Bombastes face to face!" said a hiccupping voice in the doorway; and in due course there entered my respected father, smiling cheerfully, and in dumb show inviting sundry opponents to come on and displace that hat, which rolled playfully up to the fireplace, and there lay covered with the firelight. My little sister Meg woke up, and cried lustily, my mother took the child into her arms, my father tried to kiss the twain, my mother angrily repulsed him, and I shrank away behind the sofa, half afraid, half amused.

"Won't you speak, my petsy-wetsy?—won't um speak to um's hubby-bubby?" said my father; and then he saw me, and was evidently not pleased that I should see him intoxicated.

"Why is not Georgy in bed?" he said, the smile leaving his face.

"Because he is not," said my mother, sharply. "Left hours and hours by myself like this, I may surely have the companionship of my own child?"

"Hours and hours! What do you mean by hours and hours?" asked my father.

"What do I mean? You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

"So he is, so he is," said a gentleman whom I had never seen before, stepping in at the half-open door-way; for it was not yet ten o'clock; "but it was my fault this time. The truth is, he has been dining with me, we have been settling some important business, and the wine has excited him. I walked home with him, and should have come in, but I was startled by his sudden bit of theatrical business."

"Come in now, then," said my father. "Sit down, and don't apologise for me. How I came home is my affair, sir, not yours."

In appearance he was a gentleman, this stranger to me: for that matter my father was a gentleman, but he was not dressed so well as his companion, nor was there such a tone of authority in his voice. My mother received the gentleman courteously, and my father offered him a chair.

"Georgy," said my father, putting his hand gently on my shoulder.

"Yes, father," I said, looking up at him.

"Go to bed."

"Yes, father," I said, hurrying to the staircase. "Good night, father."

"Good night;" and then all of a sudden my father's voice

changed, as if he was going to weep, when he said again, "Good night, my boy."

My mother followed me upstairs, but she did not come into my little room. Hurrying off my clothes, I crept into bed, hid my face in the pillow, and felt wretched—I knew not why. The moon, shining in at one corner of the window, sent in a ray of light across the room, falling upon a chest of drawers, and mounting upwards in a long column, like a ghost.

I could hear the murmur of voices in the room below, and I thought all about that journey in the coach, and my grandfather and his waggon, wondering what Southdown was like, and if I should ever see it, prayed for my father and mother and little Meg, drew the sheets more tightly round me as that column of moonlight gradually moved along the wall nearer the bed, and at last fell asleep and dreamed of some strange land beyond the hills that overlooked the shabby town of Elmsfield, in the rich midland county of Rothershire.

Why do I dwell upon all these little details? Ask the criminal who is condemned to die why he thinks of the days of his innocence. Ask the parched traveller in the desert why he dreams of springs and green-fringed rivers. Ask the bankrupt why his mind wanders back to the well-filled coffers of the past. Ask the dying man why he thinks of those early days when he sat by his mother's knee and listened to the sweet music of her loving voice. Ask the rich man in the burning pit why he looks up at Lazarus in heaven.

Whirling wheels and bobbins, flashing wheels, and black bands, winding and twining about the wheels like snakes; clatter and clash of machinery; a soft, oily atmosphere; girls and men singing at their work: this was the factory where my father was manager. It stood by a river that came tumbling over distant hills, gliding through the meadows on its way, by woods, under bridges, and at length flowing past the Elmsfield net factory, which at eventide threw a red reflection into the water. It was a wonderful place to me! I have often sat by the river, catching the minnows which swam about in the warm water that came down from the engine-house. I have also sat by the net-spinners, amidst those whirling wheels, and found the bands and spindles and wheels mixed up in my thoughts, pounding and tearing and tattering the wonderful, weird, strange lands of the fairy books into tatters, scattering the princes, and twisting and twirling all my notions thereon into crude, queer shapes. And the engine, with its great cranks plunging up and down, and its ponderous wheel revolving with an easy motion, like that of a tiger in a cage: these have plunged and

revolved in my infantile mind until reason has almost tottered on the brink of chaos. But never had these things bothered me so much as on the day after that little altercation with my parents. It had dawned upon me that there was something wrong in our household. That humiliating exhibition of drunkenness had settled down into my mind like a dull, painful feeling, in which there was much sorrow and sympathy for my father. If he had not seemed ashamed, I should have thought the incident rather funny than otherwise; but I had seen his eye fall on me as mine used to fall, seeking the floor, when convicted of some childish error. I had noted my mother's angry look, too; and the words she uttered were so hard and sharp, coupled with her complaints to me before my father came, that I sat and brooded over the business with a long and lasting sorrow.

My father was a kind, genial man; he could sing a good song, and he enjoyed a social glass. I think he neglected his home sometimes, and he occasionally got drunk; but this was generally when he had been out with that strange gentleman, Mr. Welby, who was one of the proprietors of the factory where my father worked so hard. He was a sleek, soft-spoken, bland gentleman, this Mr. Faustin Welby, and he thought very highly of my father. Indeed, on the day after that disagreeable incident, I heard him tell my mother so when he called in the afternoon. It was a pity, he said, that my father would frequent the Norfolk Hotel. Some people thought Mr. Newbolde went there to see the young ladies; but this might not be true. My mother shook her head and sighed, and then she told me I had better go and look after my little sister. And, somehow or other, I hated Mr. Welby. I shivered when he patted me on the head, and I threw his sixpences into the gutter. Nothing could have induced me to like Mr. Welby, and my mother was savage with me when I said he was an ugly, disagreeable fellow. She said she was a persecuted, unhappy woman, and nobody took her part.

I can see her now, with her dark hair falling in curls upon her shoulders, sitting rocking herself to and fro before a pier-glass, with little Meggie rolling at her feet, and myself sitting by her and wondering at all the mysteries of her toilette. She was a pretty woman, as I have said. She sat before her glass for hours, and dressed her hair in a dozen ways, and asked me how I liked mamma best, with flowers in her hair or without.

At these times I often fondled and kissed her, but there was no warmth in her embrace. She seemed to receive all my love as a sort of tribute. There were occasions when she would chat with me, and appear to give me her confidence; but her talk was filled

with complaints of my father's neglect; and then a cloud seemed to come upon me, and presentiments of evil. For many days after that night when my father sent me to bed, there was a quiet but serious warfare going on between my unhappy parents. One night, however, the storm burst furiously and that long after I was abed. I heard my mother say she had been deceived—her husband was a drunkard and a beggar. My father rejoined that his wife was a frivolous, silly woman, who thought more about the fashion of her ribbons than the regulation of her household. Oh, how I prayed to heaven that peace would come to these people, my parents; how I buried my head in the pillows and sobbed, and longed to throw myself between them and help them to forgive each other!

Several days passed after this, and I regularly accompanied my father to the factory. Sometimes he would sit in his little room for hours, looking vacantly at the drawings that were scattered about. I heard him sigh. And then the whirling wheels would get into my brain, and nearly drive me mad. One day Mr. Welby came in, and gave my father a newspaper, which he read, and then handed to me.

"Take that to your mother, George," he said; "and say I shall be home presently."

I went home and gave my mother the paper. It recorded the fact that Mr. Newbolde had invented a new system of winding, and had patented other improvements in machinery, which ought to bring him fame and fortune.

"Oh, yes; I know all about it," my mother said. "Mr. Welby told me of it. Your father should be very much obliged to Mr. Welby for his kindness."

Mr. Welby again! How I hated that man! I, with my infantile instinct, how I disliked this oily, smiling villain. When my mother had gone to market on Saturday morning I used to sit with Meggie on the hearth, playing at building palaces with cards, and I taught her to say "nasty Mr. Welby," until Susan, our nurse (who used to have a policeman in the back kitchen on the sly), said she would tell my mother.

"If you do, I'll tell her about the policeman," I said, on one occasion.

"Do, and he shall lock you up; but you may tell her, if you like. I don't care for your ma, for that matter. She's nothing so wonderful."

Susan said this with an air of confidence and contempt that irritated me to desperation, and I flung Meg's little shoe at her, just as Mr. Welby called. Susan told him all about it, and he laughed and patted my head, and said I was a brave little fellow.

Meggie stammered out "nasty Mr. Welby," and this seemed to amuse the scoundrel still more. Before he went he whispered to Susan, and gave her something; and it was in my mind to go straight to my father and tell him, though I had not the remotest idea why I should do so, or what the effect of it would be.

How slowly and wearily the time dragged on it boots not now to say. It was varied in my life by a hard struggle to understand Mr. Birch's views of arithmetic at the day school, and by long lonely rambles in the meadows outside our old-fashioned town. I had no companions except now and then such as forced themselves upon my society, and insisted upon doing battle with me occasionally. Through the mists that have gathered about those early years I can see myself standing before some stalwart young scamp, who would fight me whether or no, and receiving my punishment like a man.

It was not a desirable place to be brought up in, Elmsfield. The boys were bullies and the men were brutes. At least, that was my boyish experience. The girls were fit companions for the boys; and the women—well, I did not know very much about the women, thank God! And even now I may do the Elmsfielders an injustice generally. If I do, they will forgive me on account of my juvenile prejudices; for as a man I know them not. They never understood me, no more than they understood any one else who was born with sensibilities. They made game of my black hair and my white stockings. And, I fear me, my father did not understand me, though he always treated me kindly; and I loved him more than ever because he was so good to Meg—little, toddling Meggie, with her merry blue eyes and her rosy, dimpled cheeks.

My sister Meg was six years old, and I was twelve, when the first great trouble of my life came upon me. The misunderstanding between our parents increased to such an extent that hardly a day passed without a row. A new element of bitterness was the introduction of Mr. Welby's name into the family disputes. Even to a boy of my years it was pretty clear that this kind of perpetual warfare must have some violent ending. Impressed with Sunday-school and other advice, I religiously prayed for peace, but peace came not; and when sometimes I went out, which was very seldom, to a neighbour's house where there were no family disturbances, and the children were happy and not afraid, the home to which I returned seemed to chill all my better feelings and fill my heart with despair, until little Meg trotted up to me, and pulled my hand, and climbed upon my knee, and buried her dear little face in my neck.

At length the end came. One day my mother was specially kind

to Susan and myself. There was a circus in the town, and she gave permission for Susan to take me to see the riders. When we were ready to go she took me in her arms, and kissed me—kissed me so fondly that it seemed as if an angel had come down specially from heaven with an answer to my prayers. There were tears in her eyes, too, when we left her, and the expression of her face seemed to steal into my heart and make it ache; but this soon passed away in the joy of her fervent kiss and the new sensation of being sent out to be amused and made happy.

In latter days I have been to see the riders, that my memory of dishonour and my title to vengeance might not expire. I have been there to take my turn, as it were, upon the wheel—to be broken on the wheel of my own memory, to suffer and grow strong.

You have sat, no doubt, my friend, and seen the clown tumble, and you have laughed with the little ones, as I laughed in my early days; but now, that scene would fill my ears with mingled sounds of sobs and laughter.

On that night, years ago, while I was clapping my hands at the tricks of Mr. Merryman, Fate was preparing for me such a future as few could have lived through and retained their reason.

When we reached home the house was in disorder, the fires had gone out, the candles were not lighted, and all the place was still as death. I remember taking hold of Susan's gown and asking her what was the matter. She made no reply; but lighted the candles, went to my mother's room, which was strewn with litter. There was a letter on the dressing-table for my father. I learnt this afterwards.

Little Meggie was fast asleep in her cot in the next room.

"Mamma,—where is mamma?" I cried.

"Don't make a noise," said Susan; "she is gone away."

While her son was enjoying the quips and cranks of the clown and falling into a passion of juvenile love for the young lady who sprang through paper hoops and leaped over yards of blue silk, while little Meg was asleep, and dreaming of angels, perhaps, and that wonderland which I tried sometimes to make her comprehend in my simple reading of our fairy books; while my father was smoking his pipe and thinking out that great invention of his, which should make his family rich; while the moon was shining upon Elmsfield, my mother was deserting her home, her husband, and her children for ever—deserting all, perjuring her soul, blackening the innocent names of her children, for a villain.

The whole town rang with the news next day. Mrs. Newbolde had eloped with Mr. Welby.

It was a pitiable sight to see my father, who had alternate fits of

rage and sorrow, of weeping and cursing, of sad sobriety and wild drunkenness, which lasted for many days. In the intervals I carried little Meggie to that walk by the river, and we sat and looked into the murmuring waters, and listened to the song of the factory. Despite all our troubles and strange griefs, which we hardly understood, the river flowed on as before, the wheels flashed in the factory windows, the birds sang, the sun shone, and the world was not altered in the least, except when we were at home; and here the change was great. Not that we had enjoyed any very great happiness there, only that we remembered days of calm and quiet, and some happy times when father was at home and mother pleasant and talkative; we remembered a few sunny hours when the whole household turned out into the fields to gather buttercups and daisies; we remembered a few warm, loving, tender caresses; but after that night at the circus a dull, heavy, indescribable gloom settled upon our house, culminating a few weeks afterwards in a terrible catastrophe.

Susan was sure something was going to happen. There had been funerals in the candle, death-ticks in the cupboard, a dog had howled all night for a week; and with these and other signs of death the woman had frightened me into a condition quite ready to receive the horrible news which was brought to us one morning after my father had been out all night.

"Mr. Newbolde's found drownded in the river," said the blunt messenger, "and they've took him to a public-house to hold an inquest on him."

He had fallen into the river, they said, on his way home from the factory, and the verdict was accidental death. I never saw him. It was thought best that I should not, and my brightest memory of him is therefore but little disturbed. I only think of the active, strong-limbed gentleman who carried me on his shoulders up the factory-stairs into that little room where he planned and drew those wonderful designs for the net-makers. Then my memory wanders to an old church, in which I sit a mourner in a great black pew, looking up at Christ rising from the dead, and wondering if God is really good and kind and merciful.

What a terrible life mine has been! What an awful life it is! I am the wandering Jew, the outcast, the vagrant, the drunkard, the vagabond, the madman if you will, with a terrible mission. I am waiting until I meet Welby. When he crosses my path, as cross it he must, there will be a just retribution. The day is coming—sooner than he thinks, much sooner.

Our house and all the furniture was sold, and a neighbour took Meggie to mind and sent me to work—to work in that same factory

where he had worked, and for years I crossed that bridge daily, and for years saw my father lying in the water. I could not shut out the picture; it would come up in the rippling river; in sunshine and in shadow, in calm and in storm, at morning, noon, and night. I know not why it was sent to me, that my vengeance should not slumber.

One day Meg disappeared. She was not dead: worse than that; she was gone nobody knew whither. They talked of gipsies, the women; but the men said her mother had sent for her. Welby had sold his share in the factory, and gone to live in London, they said. But the day before Meg disappeared he had been seen in Elmsfield. The women said it was a good thing for the child; the men said Welby was an infernal scoundrel, and that he would come to a bad end. They never said anything ill of my mother—out of respect for me I suppose—and it was not until afterwards that I came to fully understand how cruelly she had behaved. Not a message to me, not a word, not a line; she left me alone in the desert without a future. If Meggie had remained to me I could have worked for her, and to protect her would have been a noble ambition. But it was ordained, I expect, that I should have but one thing to accomplish in life, his downfall, my dead father's vengeance.

From the time that they took Meggie away there are strange blanks in my life; the years have come and gone in my memory like glimpses of light on stormy days. I don't seem to remember them very well from that time. These people of Silver Bar have thought me drunk when I have been mad with waiting for him,—crazy at the strange impulse I have had to stay here, when I should have gone the round of the world after him. "The day will come" has always been my motto, and in duty to it I have traversed the world, toiling, working, waiting. I used to hunt for that man, trusting to my instinct of vengeance as a divining-rod, but I do so no longer. Fate will bring us together wherever we are. It is written in the book. So I have waited even here for tidings of him. The marks of my footsteps are in many countries, and I come here, thousands of miles from civilisation, to hear of him, to find the clue. You bring me the token. I take it on my knees with gratitude. You see I am not the rough, hardened, drunken brute that Silver Bar thinks. I have studied human nature and know how to meet the rugged bear, and how to lie down with the lamb. Misfortune has taught me philosophy, riches have been given to me at last for her, for my sister Meg, for you my dear friend, the messenger in the wilderness. As for him, we shall meet again on that bridge at midnight, that bridge near the mill. I

see him now creeping in the shadow as if he feared a ghost, cowering before me who am the image of my dead father.

Hickory Maynard, your Fitzherbert Willoughby is my Faustin Welby. Your Margaret is my little Meg. The only man who has any right to stand between you gives his consent to your marriage. He makes two easy conditions, the right to provide her dowry, and the pledge of your honour and your oath never to reveal to her this meeting. Hard to go through the world with such a secret! Hard! Forget me, I have done you no wrong. Kindness is easy to forget. I have met men who cannot remember the deepest obligations for more than a day, unless it is to resent them on the first opportunity. No, my friend; there are wrongs which no man forgets. You have suffered but a short eclipse of your happiness. You give the pledge, you swear the oath? Good. To-morrow we part for ever, part as if we had never met, unless my story has changed your views in regard to Margaret Newbolde. That is her name; let it be registered in the vestry of Elmsfield church. You will marry her there. And leave for Italy that very day, take her for a long happy tour beneath sunny skies. You are surprised that I am so calm and quiet? It is the eve of the coming day. Have you ever been lost at sea, the prey of darkness, to find yourself safe at dawn off a friendly coast? That is how I feel now. Good night, Hickory Maynard! To-morrow, good bye! The next day, strangers—for her sake!

En Passant.

EARLY last month Signor Rossi was invited by the King of Italy to pay him a visit. In the course of their conversation, we are informed, the King spoke of the low ebb to which the histrionic art had fallen in that country. "What we want," he said, "is a theatre like the Comédie Française. Your art is a powerful instrument of civilisation. That civilisation must emanate from Rome. My father loved and esteemed you, Signor Rossi, as well he might. You are an honourable débris of the troupe of which Marchionni, Ristori, Vestri, Taddei, Bellotti, and Pieri were members. Halcyon days! The art was then well represented. Adieu," shaking him by the hand; "those days shall return before long, I promise you."

THE Literary Congress at Paris accomplished little more than to afford an opportunity to authors to express their opinions on the subjects of the right of literary property and international copyright. The Congress thinks that the full property right of the author should pass to his heirs, and that the right of indiscriminate publication should not begin until twenty years after the author's death. As to international copyrights, the plan proposed by the Congress is a very simple one. An author of any literary, scientific, or artistic work, having secured a copyright in the country where the work is first published, should obtain the same protection in all other countries. It was also recommended that international treaties be made, reserving to authors the right of authorising the translation or adaptation of their works. That the work of the Congress may not end here, in the mere suggestion of reforms in the laws of nations, provision has been made for the organisation of an International Literary Association, having its principal seat in Paris. This organisation may, in time, secure for authors that measure of protection to which their works are entitled.

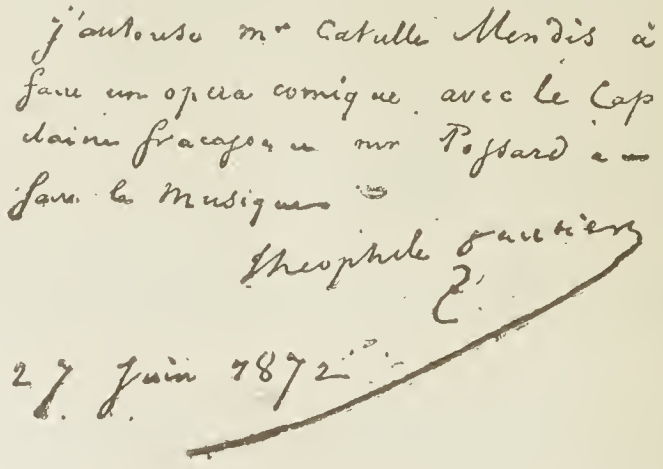
IN the course of their recent peregrinations the Royal Archæological Institute visited the Manor House at Cotterstock, Northamptonshire. This house belonged to Dryden's cousin, Mrs. Steward, and towards the end of his life the poet was frequently seen there. In one of his letters to her (his cousin) he asks her to "order some small beer to be brewed for me without hops, or with a very inconsiderable quantity, because I lost my health last year through drinking bitter beer at Titmarsh. It may perhaps be sour, but I like it not the less, though it may be small enough."

THE antiquarian is so deeply absorbed in the study of the past that he often pays no heed to the discoveries made in his own time. The testaments of the old author in whom he places so unquestioning a trust may

have been disproved again and again, but of this he is not aware. Last month, while the London and Middlesex Archæological Society were at Harefield, it was stated by a member of that body, Mr. Harland, that during Queen Elizabeth's visit to that place in 1602 *Othello* was performed by Burbage's company, Shakespere among the number. Not one of Mr. Harland's hearers seemed to know that this tradition rests exclusively upon a document which has long since been shown to be a forgery.

Another tradition connected with Harefield Place seems entitled to credence. The house was burnt to the ground in 1660, and the calamity is ascribed to the careless use of a light by Sir Charles Sedley while reading in bed. This master of the "prevailing gentle art," as Rochester called him, is now remembered only as one of the most licentious courtiers and dramatists of the Restoration; but there is at least one bright spot in his character which should not be forgotten. His daughter was dishonoured by James II., and by way of compensation was created Countess of Dorchester. Eleven out of every twelve of the courtiers of that day would have regarded the loss as outweighed by the gain, but Sedley was of another order. "Her exaltation," he said, "only makes her degradation more apparent. I hate ingratitude; and therefore, as the king has made my daughter a countess, I will endeavour to make his daughter a queen." He accordingly took part in the Revolution of 1688.

By a noteworthy coincidence the last rehearsal of *Le Capitaine Fracasse* was held on the sixth anniversary of the day on which Théophile Gautier authorised M. Mendés to use his story as the groundwork of a comic opera. Here is the authorisation:—



No man who belonged to the Fielding and other literary clubs of a quarter of a century ago can have forgotten Frederick Guest Tomlins, the wit, the scholar, the bibliophilist, the dramatic critic and essayist. Thackeray, Jerrold, Oxenford, Talfourd, and Davison were proud to make him one of themselves, and it is on record that in repartee he alone could venture to enter the lists with the author of the *Rent Day*. He was well read in Shakspere, and would declare in his genial way that there was no subject which he could not fit with a quotation from "Wild Will's" plays. "How about a treadmill?" said a friend to him in triumph

on one occasion. "Treadmill?" replied Tomlins; "why, 'down, down, my climbing sorrow.'" He died a few years ago, leaving his wife and two children so completely unprovided for that during the last six months they have been inmates of St. George's Workhouse. A subscription on their behalf has been opened by Mr. E. L. Blanchard, whose address is 6, Adelphi-terrace, Strand, W.C.

The competitions at the Conservatoire were held early last month. As far as tragedy and comedy are concerned, the result must be deemed unsatisfactory. In no case was exceptional talent exhibited, and the jury, which consisted of M. Ambroise Thomas, M. Dumas, M. Legouvé, M. Jules Barbier, and several others, declined to award the first prize at all. The singing competition was of a more gratifying nature, although it would be rash to predict that any one of the pupils will win high honours on the boards. The essays in comic opera were particularly successful. The first grand opera prizes fell to the lot of M. Lorrain, Mdlle. Vaillant, and Mdlle. Seguin. And here we may mention an incident which has caused no little excitement in Paris. In return for the instruction they gratuitously receive at the Conservatoire the pupils are required to give their services for a certain period to one of the subsidised theatres. This condition has always been complied with; but it is now discovered that Mdlle. Vaillant has signed an engagement with the manager of a Brussels theatre, and that a M. Guitry, who won the second prizes in tragedy and comedy, has undertaken to appear at the Gymnase. The question thus raised is to be determined in a court of law.

Mr. H. J. Montague died at San Francisco on the 11th August, in the thirty-fifth year of his age. This unexpected event deprives the stage of one of the most accomplished *jeunes premiers* it possessed, as those who have seen his Lord Beaufoy in *School*, to say nothing of many other impersonations, will at once acknowledge. Mr. Montague, whose real name was Mann, obtained in early life a clerkship in the Sun Fire Office, but forsook it for the stage. Befriended by Mr. Boucicault, he made his first essay before the footlights at the Royal Westminster Theatre, as Astley's was then called, on the 26th January, 1863, as the junior counsel in *Effie Deans*. In course of time he appeared at the Adelphi, the Queen's, the Olympic, and the Prince of Wales's Theatres, his progress in his profession being very rapid. In 1870 he was associated with Mr. James and Mr. Thorn in the lesseeship of the Vaudeville Theatre, but left them in the following year to take possession of the Globe, where he played Lord Chilton in *False Shame*. In 1874 he went to America, and has not since been seen by an English audience, except when, during a brief holiday in 1876, he came over to play his original part of Jack Wyatt in the *Two Roses* for the benefit of Miss Amy Fawsitt.

The *New York Times* says that at one of the theatres in a town of Nevada, the play of the *Forty Thieves* was lately presented, but in rather a meagre manner, as may be inferred from the lack of abundant scenery and properties in the far West. When Ali Baba had seen the thieves

enter and quit the cave, he went to the wings and brought in a mule, which, having taken grave offence at something, awaited its opportunity for revenge. No sooner had Ali come out of the cave with his bags of wealth, and attempted to put them on the back of the beast, than it began its part of the performance. It let fly with its heels; kicked the shavings (the supposed riches) out of the bags; kicked down the cavern; kicked down a whole forest; kicked down the wings; kicked the end of the base-viol leaning against the stage to pieces; smashed the footlights; and finally put Ali *hors de combat* by planting both feet in the pit of his stomach. The quadruped continued kicking as if he were hung on a pivot, until a rope was fastened around him, and he was dragged off by the united strength of the company. The Nevadans want to give the mule a benefit.

Dr. Scoffern writes to contradict the reports now current as to the manner in which Miss Davenport was treated by Mr. Wills. "Mr. Wills," he says, "is on the Continent. Nobody who knows him intimately, as I do, would credit these statements. I happened to be present at the interview between Miss Davenport and Mr. Wills, during which the bargain was concluded. Being introduced as an intimate friend, I heard all the conversation. Miss Davenport was piqued at what she fancied to be Mr. Hare's discourtesy in declining, on the score of much occupation, to give her an interview. She went on to say that an American manager would have given her an entire box during her pleasure. 'As I am to produce *Olivia*,' she said, 'I should like to be present for at least a week to make observations and take notes. I require an entire box,' she continued, 'in order to take notes with comfort; but I find it expensive.' Upon this Mr. Wills expressed regret; and, by way of showing his own inability to forward her views, he told her that, having engaged to take me on a certain evening, he was so unable to find a place anywhere before the curtain, that we both had to go behind the scenes. Here the conversation dropped, Mr. Wills taking Miss Davenport out to dine. Now, Sir, I ask whether, after Miss Davenport had so pointedly expressed her need of having a private box several evenings consecutively, it would not have been altogether absurd and inconsequential for Mr. Wills to have sent her two stall tickets at all? As to the allegation that he debited her with the cost of the tickets, the charge is absurd. For my part, however, I should be glad to find it substantiated, even at the sacrifice of my friend's politeness. Mr. Wills has been so utterly regardless of money, looking upon it as of no seeming value, that I should look upon the incident, if true, of debiting a lady with the cost of two stall tickets as evidence of amendment in respect to the gravest failing that my friend Wills possesses."

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

IF the play in which Mdlle. Beatrice and her company have made their appearance at the Olympic Theatre during the off-season be all that can be made out of MM. Dennery & Mallian's drama, it certainly seems a pity that any trouble should have been taken to produce in *The Woman of the People* another version of the play, already made familiar, so far as its chief features are concerned, in Mr. Dion Boucicault's *Janet Pride*. The dialogue, as translated by Mr. Benjamin Webster, jun., does not seem to be of a character able to justify or to suggest any great variety of literary treatment; the story is commonplace and improbable, and cannot be said to possess general interest, though it has points which arouse much sympathy from the pit and the gallery. *The Woman of the People*, as the heroine of this domestic drama is called, has no distinctive characteristics, save those supplied in her social and moral superiority to the "man of the people"—a mechanic—whom she has married. Marie Bertrand is an industrious young woman, who, by her thrift, makes it possible for her married life to be happy and comfortable; Bertrand is dissipated and idle, and even on his wedding-day gets deliberately drunk a few minutes after promising his bride that he will reform. Misery is, of course, in store for a domestic partnership thus inauspiciously inaugurated; and accordingly we are soon shown how Bertrand drinks away all chance of happiness, health, and comfort for himself, his wife, and his child. So far there is nothing in the play more dramatic than are the terrible tales of intoxication and its results told to us in the didactic tracts issued by well-meaning teetotallers. The moral is, of course, excellent, for we sympathise wholly with poor Marie, and are made to feel that Bertrand is a despicable coward as well as a fool for continually breaking his good resolutions the moment that he is tempted by bad companions. But a good moral does not necessarily make a good play; indeed, the very portions of this drama which, according to the street placards, have been most instrumental in promoting the cause of temperance, provide an entertainment of the dullest description. We have a French *ouvrier* whose slang is that of Whitechapel; we have a distressed and despairing mother, who utterly fails to catch the tone of the class which she is striving to depict. There is, as it seems to us, no more realistic truth in Mdlle. Beatrice's delineation of a working woman's indignation and grief than in the erratic stage-snow which falls in the sunshine during one of the actress's chief scenes. In her own line, which is not perhaps a very wide one, Mdlle. Beatrice is a useful and artistic actress, as, for example, in her well-conceived picture of the heroine of *Nos Intimes*, where she showed the lightness of touch needed to prevent certain passages of the play from becoming offensive, and seeming impossible when transferred to English society. But over the simple emotions called for in this sketch of humble life

she has little command, earnestly though she strives to sink the somewhat mincing and affected fine lady in the outspoken and grief-stricken artisan. *The Woman of the People* does not show Mdlle. Beatrice at her best, nor is it likely that she can feel or fancy herself at home in such an impersonation. Yet it is not difficult to guess the reasons which may have induced her to occupy her stay in London with this drama. Certain episodes in the drama, as, for example, the picturesque scene which shows the unhappy heroine in the act of consigning her baby to the Enfants Trouvés that she may save its life by blasting her own, have in themselves considerable power; and the after-development of the plot, though artistically inferior to its foundation, possesses a hold over the imaginations of those who like to watch the partial success and final defeat of the machinations of a thorough-paced villain. Thus, when Marie's child is stolen from the Foundling Hospital to be substituted for the dead infant of the young widow whom the child-stealer wishes to propitiate and to marry; when Marie recognises her own offspring in the baby whom she is called in to nurse; and finally, when her frantic appeals are received by the arch-plotter as a proof that she is mad, and must be confined in a lunatic asylum, the story of a much-tried woman is seen to keep many of its hearers breathless with excited attention, a result which need not surprise those who are acquainted with the species of dramatic food most eagerly accepted by audiences of the order appealed to by the placards to which allusion has already been made. For the rest, *The Woman of the People* is placed upon the stage in a manner tolerably effective, and it is acted smoothly, though without any of the special merit which has belonged to many of the previous efforts of Mdlle. Beatrice's company. Mr. F. Harvey plays the part of the dissipated artisan with frankness and commendable heartiness, though without any special grip of individual character; Mr. Carter-Edwardes is energetic, albeit highly conventional as the very conventional villain, and Miss Charlotte Saunders, as well as Mr. George Warde, are to be congratulated upon their careful treatment of minor rôles.

The success which has attended the reappearance of Mr. Sothern as Lord Dundreary suggests some curious reflections. How are we to account for the apparently inexhaustible vitality this odd character possesses? Many will reply, and certainly not without justification, "by the remarkable effect with which it is played by Mr. Sothern." This, however, seems to be only a part of the answer to the question. The secret of his lordship's popularity, we think, lies in the fact that he is a caricature. The many faithful transcripts of real life which have been set before us in the theatre since the production of *Our American Cousin* are now completely or almost forgotten; Lord Dundreary, who from most points of view is an impossible personage, can still draw large audiences. Accordingly, it would be excusable to assume that if a character is to live in these degenerate days it must be to some extent inconsistent with human nature. Divested of the *ad captandum* incidents and speeches associated with the part, Lord Dundreary stands forth a distinct ideal, a quaint expression of the state of mind to which persons

whose brains are not sufficiently exercised are usually reduced. His lordship, however much the superficial observer may disagree with us, is not a fool. If the contrary were the case the well-known enigmas would not occur to him at all, and his inability to solve them arises from mental confusion as distinguished from imbecility. In this respect, allowance being made for an exaggeration of the mental confusion, he has but too many counterparts in actual life; the ideal is relieved by a dash of the real without losing its distinctive character.

Amongst the few new plays, or plays new to London, which have been produced during a month which has been unusually dull even for August, are two comedies given at the Aquarium theatre. The first of these is by Mr. Such Granville, and is called *That's Why She Loved Him*, the second, produced tentatively in the afternoon, is *Evening Shadows*, and is from the pen of an author who withholds his name. Mr. Granville's play, which has been received with singular toleration by the public, is very sad nonsense, and possesses no discoverable qualification for success on the stage. Its author's main object seems to have been to provide himself with an overpoweringly strong part; but as he has forgotten to supply the character which he acts with any adequate justification for its prominence of situation and its exuberance of speech, the result even in this direction is by no means satisfactory. Mr. Such Granville, too, acts even worse than he writes, and it is little short of marvellous that he should, even under pressure, consent to imperil the success of any piece in which he is interested by taking a share in its stage representation. *That's Why She Loved Him* is a play of the kind which seems to justify managers of mark in their continual complaints as to the quality of the pieces presented to them by the "great unplayed." *Evening Shadows* suggests that in its author we have an unknown playwright who may one day do some useful work for the stage. *Evening Shadows* is not by any means a perfect work of its kind; it is unequal, and full of reminiscences of plots and situations and motives of popular plays of to-day and of days gone by. But it has the advantages always derivable from a straightforward plot, from a series of fairly interesting situations, and from dialogue which makes little attempt at fine writing, and is devoted to the simple purpose of causing the different speakers to give natural expression to their thoughts.

The interim season at the Lyceum Theatre was occupied with the reproduction of Mr. Tom Taylor's sterling though far from exhilarating drama *Mary Warner*. The object of the revival was of course readily found in the strong and thoroughly legitimate effect which Miss Bateman is always able to make in the character which she created some eight years ago. Self-sacrifice has always proved to be one of the grandest and most touching of dramatic motives, never missing its mark save when its motive is insufficient or its accomplishment is carelessly worked out. In *Mary Warner* Mr. Tom Taylor has with his usual skill avoided both of these mistakes; and as in his purpose he is ably seconded by the actress for whom the play and character are specially fitted, the object aimed at is satisfactorily secured. By Messrs. Fernandez and Billington, and

by Miss Virginia Francis, other rôles were conscientiously and efficiently played; and *Mary Warner* was thus placed on the stage in a way which did no small credit to the off-season of the Lyceum.

August is the month for holidays, and players occasionally make holiday like the rest of the world, though it is an old joke against them that they spend every evening which they can steal from the stage in visits to another part of the theatre. Accordingly, we find that the companies playing the pieces which have been most successful during the past season, such as *Diplomacy, Olivia, Pink Dominos,* and the everlasting *Our Boys,* have recently undergone various temporary modifications during the absence of prominent actors and actresses. Thus Mr. Conway, Mr. Forbes Robinson, and Miss Amy Roselle take the places at the Prince of Wales's left vacant by Mr. Kendal, Mr. Bancroft, and Mrs. Kendal respectively; Miss Marion Terry, instead of her sister, plays Olivia at the Court Theatre; Mr. Righton appears as Perkyn Middlewick at the Vaudeville, and Mr. Henry Neville as Lorance at the Adelphi. Comparisons on such occasions as these are inevitable in any critical examination of the manner in which the somewhat thankless tasks are fulfilled; and it must be confessed that in no instance except that of Mr. Neville's Adelphi engagement is the change altogether satisfactory. It is, however, unnecessary, as it would be ungracious, to enter into detailed comparison, and we may content ourselves with congratulating Mr. Conway and Miss M. Terry—whose position was exceptionally trying—as well as Mr. Neville, upon the result of their efforts to strike the happy mean between needless change and slavish imitation.

IN THE PROVINCES.

In the course of the past month Miss Ellen Terry and Mr. Charles Kelly appeared at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Liverpool, in *New Men and Old Acres.* "It is exceedingly rare," says the *Courier,* "that a play is rendered with such consummate art and refinement of taste as the leading members of the cast succeed in achieving. Miss Terry in her personation of Lilian Vavasour is simply perfection. Natural and graceful in expression, vivacious and inexhaustible in ever-varying phases of feeling, she maintains an unbroken spell which is only deepened by the delivery of each fresh stroke of humour, girlish outburst of sentiment, accompanied by attitudes and unspoken expressions as neat and bewitching as ever were witnessed on a stage. The transition entailed by the development of the piece she follows with a full sense of the growth and power of the part, until at the climax one is confronted with the fact that a complete and charming character has been acted with absolute grace and histrionic ability. As for Mr. Kelly's Samuel Brown, the quiet-mannered, self-possessed, opulent man of business, susceptible, nevertheless, to the feelings of humanity, and especially to the undesigning charms of a natural and gifted young lady, the acting is admirable in the extreme." The *Porcupine* devotes a long article to Miss Terry's acting, describing her as "the actress most gifted with genius on the English stage." Mr. and Mrs. Kelly have also appeared in a simple yet effective little

classical comedietta, *The Cynic's Defeat, or All is Vanity.* The author, Mr. Alfred Thompson, contrasts the conditions of Diogenes as a railer at women and their vanities and as one who has fallen under feminine spells. The text is pointed and witty, and Miss Terry and Mr. Kelly have imbibed the true spirit of the elegant trifle.

Mr. Toole has been called the "shooting star," and it is clear that he intends to justify the appellation. It would take up much of our space to enumerate the places he has played at during the last two or three weeks, or to do justice to the success he has everywhere achieved. Now he is at Bristol, now at Plymouth, now at Swansea, now in some out-of-the-way town. The piece on which he principally relies is *A Fool and his Money.* Miss Wallis appeared in the course of the month at Scarborough and Blackpool in a variety of plays, supported by Mr. Edward Compton. Another distinguished visitor to Scarborough was Miss Ada Cavendish, who, on the 12th, commenced an engagement there previous to her departure for America. Mr. Charles Dillon's singularly vigorous performance of King Lear has been one of the attractions held out to Liverpool playgoers, and large audiences assembled to witness it. At the end of July the *Diplomacy* company opened their campaign at Portsmouth. Dora is played by Miss Carlisle, Count Orloff by Mr. Ward, the Countess Zicka by Miss Murdoch, Baron Stein by Mr. Langford, Julian Beauclerc by Mr. J. D. Beveridge, the Marquise by Mrs. Sidney, and Captain Beauclerc by Mr. Barnes. The company subsequently visited Exeter and Bath, meeting in each city with a hearty reception.

The Strand company, headed by Miss Swanborough and Mr. Vernon, fulfilled engagements at Liverpool and Glasgow. "Mr. Burnand," says the *Glasgow News,* "has a happy touch-and-go method of writing that invests his characters with an inviting freshness. The whimsical fancies of a fertile imagination are in him tethered by a constant recurrence to the platitudes of ordinary life, provoking the absurdest remarks and situations, and carrying forward the piece with spirit and gusto. Added to this, the Strand company is exceptionally strong. The welcome tendered to it on the occasion of their first visit to Glasgow was hearty, and a flattering testimony to the seasonable character of the evening's amusement." The principal attraction at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, was *Fritz,* with Mr. Emmett as the hero. The drama, according to the *Albion,* remains much the same as it was, with the addition of an act which, being the initial portion of the piece, forms a sort of prologue. Its value lies in the circumstance that it suggests a stronger motive for the succeeding incidents of the play than the imagination of the spectator could provide. "We have so frequently dealt with Mr. Emmett's acting," adds the *Albion,* "that it is needless to enter here into any detailed reference to it. It may be mentioned, however, that he seems to have acquired a greater share of the element of passion, and that his method of expression generally has, if possible, become smoother. The delightful reality of his love of children is heart-searching, constituting, indeed, the source of the genial influence which Mr. Emmett exercises over even the most

callously inclined that come within his reach. His art in this direction is perfection itself." From Liverpool Mr. Emmett proceeded to Manchester, where the merits of his impersonation were cordially recognised. Here he was followed by Madame Dolaro, whose engagement was not so successful as had been anticipated. During a visit to Glasgow Mr. John Coleman brought out a version by Mr. Willoughby of *Les Misérables.* It was coherent and dramatically effective, and in Valjean Mr. Coleman had a part in which he could not but appear to advantage.

In the course of the month Mr. Craven Robertson's company played at Lancaster and Belfast; the *Stolen Kisses* company at Southport, Leicester, and Birmingham; the *Our Boys* company at Lincoln, Lancaster, and Southport; Miss Marriott's company at Liverpool; Mr. Pitt's company at Newcastle and Middlesbrough; the *Proof* company at Birmingham and Liverpool; and Miss Carlotta Leclercq at Leicester, Liverpool, and Hanley. On the 19th *Olivia* was played at Manchester, Mr. Calvert being the Vicar and Miss Florence Terry the heroine. Mr. and Mrs. Kendal's tour, with *Diplomacy,* commenced on the 26th at Newcastle, whence they proceed to Glasgow and Edinburgh.

IN PARIS.

The influx of foreigners into the French capital continues without very appreciable abatement, and, as a consequence, many theatres are not only open but well attended. During the last month some changes have been made in the *affiches.* Pending the production of the Marquis d'Ivry's *Amants de Vérone,* in which M. Capoul will appear, the manager of the Théâtre Lyrique, who has been compelled by the illness of M. Melchissedec to withdraw *Le Capitaine Fracasse,* brought out in the first week of August the long-talked-of version in French of Verdi's *Aïda.* The translator, M. Nuitter, is entitled to the positive praise of having done his work without robbing the opera of any of its characteristic features or attractiveness. The original cast, including as it did such accomplished artists as Madame Stolz, M. Pandolfini, Madame Waldman, and M. Masini, was unusually strong, and was in all respects superior to the company to whom the execution of the work is now entrusted. Mdlle. Ambre, as the heroine, evidently spares no pains to do justice to the part, but labours under the disadvantage of a somewhat disagreeable voice. That she has made considerable progress in her art since her début may be granted without hesitation. M. Nouvelli appears as Rhadame, Mdlle. Bernardi as Amneris, and M. Aubert as Amorasro. Be its shortcomings what they might, the performance seemed to afford unbounded satisfaction to the audience. A revival at the Opéra Comique of *Les Mousquetaires de la Reine* has completely failed. The inefficiency of Mdlle. Ploux in the principal character was so palpable that it evoked many hisses; while the baritone, who came with high recommendations from Toulouse, broke down from sheer nervousness. Perhaps the most noticeable event of the month was the revival at the

Gaîté of *Orphée aux Enfers*, with M. Hervé, the composer, as Jupiter, Madame Peschard as Eurydice, M. Léonce as Pluto, and M. Grivot as Mercury. The audience, it need hardly be said, was composed for the most part of foreigners, and the opera, which has now been played in Paris nearly a thousand times, was very warmly received. The Eurydice of Madame Peschard is certainly one of the most sparkling performances of its kind to be seen in Paris. The Spanish dancers presented to us by the manager of the Gymnase turn out to be little less than impostors, and if it were not for *Le Monde où l'on s'Amuse* and the *Gamin de Paris*, with which the entertainment commences, the theatre might find it advisable to close its doors. Much interest was excited in the middle of the month by the appearance of M. Bouhy at the Opéra as Hamlet, a part in which M. Faure may bid defiance to all rivalry. Though deficient in warmth, especially in the scene with Ophelia, the young baritone showed that he had not miscalculated his powers in making the attempt, his singing going far to realise—and this is saying a good deal—the most high-flown expectations of his friends. The week before last the Comédie Française revived the *Fille de Roland*, which had not been represented for three years. Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt reappeared as Berthe, but was so unwell that she could not play with anything like the effect she is wont to produce in the part. The audience were to a certain extent compensated for their disappointment by the unlooked-for excellence of M. Sylvain as Ratbert, in which he is allowed on nearly all hands to have surpassed Chéri himself. The Théâtre du Palais Royal is relying upon two pieces of a kind peculiar to that establishment—*Le Réveillon* and *La Mariée du Mardi Gras*. In the latter, M. Brasseur, who is now directing the Théâtre des Nouveautés, is replaced as Groseillon by a débutant, M. Plet, who imitates the points of his predecessor with scrupulous care and considerable success. Not until he thinks and acts for himself shall we have the chance of estimating his value. Two more new-comers appear in the piece—M. Raymond, who succeeds M. Gil-Perez as Lysis Chevreau, and M. Bourgeotte, who takes the place of M. Lassouche as Clodomir. The cab strike here has been commemorated by the production at the Gymnase of *Paris sans Cochers*, by M. Paul Ferrier. The piece, though *de circonstance*, will not, we may be sure, remain long in the bills; and a similar fate may be predicted for *Les Pensionnaires du Général*, a one-act comedy by M. Debry, represented at the Troisième Théâtre Français.

IN BERLIN.

The more fashionable theatres, such as the Royal Opera, the Royal Playhouse, and the Residenz Theater, remained closed throughout the month of August, but the five theatres of which we spoke last month have worked on steadily through the warm weather, and have occasionally contrived to draw pretty good audiences by means of frequent changes of programme and by the production of some pieces new to Berlin. The summer opera season at Kroll's Theater has had many attractive features, there being no lack of enterprise

on the part of the manager, who has produced a great variety of operas and introduced a number of "guests" (to use the German equivalent for "stars") to the public. Foremost amongst these comes Herr Franz Nachbaur, who opened a brief engagement as Chapelon-St.-Phar in Adam's *Postillon de Longjumeau.* The almost feminine elegance of Herr Nachbaur's picturesque make-up has not a little contributed to his popularity in this part, but his personal advantages are surpassed by the charm of his singing, and if ever the falsetto was unobjectionable, it is when used with such skill for the production of the finest shades of expression. The heroine was allotted to Fräulein Kretschy, a well-trained and tasteful singer, whose voice, however, is too delicate to contend against the noise of an orchestra, and would be heard to more advantage in the gentle *Lieder* of Schubert and Schumann, with pianoforte accompaniment. Herr Nachbaur's second part was George Brown in Boieldieu's *Dame Blanche,* in which his mellow voice and his expressive phrasing again charmed the audience, the great air in the second act being given with such combined brilliancy and tenderness as to excite enthusiasm. The rest of the cast was respectable, and the *mise-en-scène* better than it usually is at this theatre. These graceful works of the French school of comic opera firmly maintain their popularity in Germany, and frequently appear on the bills of the Paris Opéra Comique. Is it not strange that with the exception of two of Auber's works, operas of this class are entirely neglected in England, except on those rare occasions when a French opera company visits London? But to return to Kroll's Theater. Early in August, Fräulein Helene Gerl, a young singer already known favourably in Berlin by her performances at a minor theatre, appeared as Marie in Donizetti's *Fille du Régiment* (we give the French title, but the performances at Kroll's are all in German), and created a favourable impression by the technical merits of her singing and by the excellence of her acting. Subsequently the management made an ambitious but mistaken effort in the domain of grand opera, unwisely selecting Donizetti's *Belisario,* which is not one of the few grand operas of that composer that deserve to keep the stage, though, indeed, it has been revived in Rome this summer. Fräulein Marianne Eerl and Fräulein Flintzer were successful in Antonina and Irene, but the men were less satisfactory, and the opera was mounted in a manner that gave much offence to sticklers for accuracy in costumes and accessories.

Next on our list comes the Ostend Theater, where Frau Marie Swoboda and Herr Karl Wiene, from Vienna, closed their engagement early in August. Their success was marked in the German version of M. Belot's *Article* 47, which we noticed last month, and it prevented them from appearing in any other piece till the last days of their engagement, when they produced a deeply-interesting poetical play by Herr Roderich Fels, entitled *Olaf und Hialfa,* a skilful dramatisation of Heine's ballad of the same name. A word or two about the plot, which pretty closely follows the story of the ballad, save that King Harald's seduction and desertion of the daughter of the bard Singhold Harfenschall takes place before the opening of the drama. Olaf falls in love with the king's niece, Hialfa, who scorn-

fully rejects him, though he has saved her life. The princess's lady's-maid gives Olaf a rendezvous; and he, mistaking the source from which it comes, penetrates into Hialfa's chamber, where he is surprised by the king, and condemned to lose his head. The bold youth's sad fate awakens the compassion of Hialfa, who, after a long struggle between offended pride and another sentiment that imperceptibly takes possession of her heart, at last acknowledges that she returns his love. This growth of the tender passion in the maiden's breast is elaborated with much psychological skill both by the author and by Frau Swoboda, who well realises the poet's conception of the character of Hialfa, while Herr Wiene is a spirited representative of the daring lover, and Fräulein Stettmeyer made quite a hit by her vivacious impersonation of the lady's-maid. On the other hand, the actors to whom King Harald and the Bard were allotted left much to be desired. After the departure of the Viennese guests, Herr Georg Paradies opened an engagement in Charlotte Birch-Pfeiffer's *Nacht und Morgen, oder Der Falschmünzer von Paris.*

The Belle-Alliance Theater produced early in August *Der grosse Wurf,* a comedy by Herr Julius Rosen, which, though played in the provinces as long as two years ago, is quite new to Berlin. The title is misleading, for the dramatist has chosen no such lofty theme as that indicated in the well-known lines of Schiller's ode "To Joy":—

Wem der grosse Wurf gelungen,
Eines Freundes Freund zu sein.

It is no such theme as friendship that Herr Rosen has selected for illustration, but the well-worn subject of the interference of a father and mother with the domestic concerns of their newly-married daughter; in other words, the subject of Barrière's *Aux Crochets d'un Gendre* (the original of Mr. Burnand's *Family Ties*). The plot is changed by the introduction of a lady, between whom and the husband friendly but perfectly innocent relations exist, which excite the jealousy of the wife. The new comedy has the merits and defects characteristic of Herr Rosen's style, which strongly reminds one of that of Mr. H. J. Byron at the time when he first tried his hand at comedy-writing. There is the same far-fetched brilliancy in the dialogue, the same artless manner of bringing his characters on the stage and getting rid of them, and the same power of exciting the laughter of his audience. *Der grosse Wurf* was acted with a good deal of spirit, and excited much mirth. Of the Woltersdorff Theater, the last of the five mentioned above, we need not speak, as no novelty has recently been produced there.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

At the beginning of August a few dramatic performances were given at the Politeama at Rome, but they did not attract the public, and no wonder, when the programme consisted of such pieces as Bardi's *Beatrice Cenci,* a drama with strong effects, and the long-forgotten *Caligola* of Dumas *père,* which no one but an Italian manager, suffering from a very severe attack of French infatuation, would ever dream of mounting in these days. During the earlier part of the month the Corea, too, was occupied by a dramatic company, that of

Vestri De Paladini, but it presented no novelties, and failed to gain much public support. The only theatre that has been at all fortunate during this hot season is the Manzoni, where the Neapolitan company to which we alluded last month has drawn good audiences by the performance of several specimens of Italian opera-buffa new to Rome. One of the most successful of the novelties was *La Fiesta di Piedigrotta*, a work originally produced at the Teatro Nuovo of Naples in 1852, and which is regarded by many as the best composition of Luigi Ricci, though *Crispino e la Comare*, which he wrote in collaboration with his brother Federico, is more widely known. The first and third acts of the *Fiesta di Piedigrotta* are open to the reproach of diffuseness, but the second act is brilliant throughout, and presents a most spirited picture of Neapolitan life and customs, to which full effect was given by the various members of the company, who acted with astonishing *brio*, and were quite equal to the vocal requirements of the opera. The *Campana dell' Eremitaggio* of Signor Sarria was to have been produced in the course of the month under the direction of the composer himself, but was not performed in time for notice in our present number.

Dulness prevailed at Milan through the month of August, only broken by a novel entertainment given at the Dal Verme Theatre by a company of forty children from Rome, whose ages vary from seven to fourteen, and who have succeeded in exciting the interest of the public by their performances of opera and ballet. The season opened with *Madame Angot*, which was sung and acted by the children with wonderful spirit. The little conspirators created a remarkable sensation. In addition to Lecocq's opera, the repertory of this juvenile company, which is managed by Signor Angelo Benaglia, comprises the *Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Crispino e la Comare*, *Il Ritorno di Columella*, and *I Due Ciabattini*, and such ballets as *Il Sogno d'un Pescatore*, *I Briganti*, *Lo Sposo Burlato*, &c., in which the graceful dancing and comic by-play of the young performers were highly diverting. At the Teatro della Commenda a dramatic company have been acting, with but moderate success, an Italian version of M. Emile Augier's *Madame Caverlet*, a work more frequently acted on the Italian than on the French stage. Great preparations are being made for the coming celebration of La Scala centenary.

IN MADRID.

Many weeks have elapsed since the production of anything worthy of notice at any of the Madrid theatres. House after house gave up the useless struggle against the adverse influences of summer weather, till in August the long list of theatres that usually appears in the papers under the heading "Espectaculos" dwindled down to two, namely, the Teatro del Principe Alfonso and the Alhambra. At the former, a spectacular piece entitled *Los Sabinos del Capitan Grant*, a dramatic version of one of M. Jules Verne's popular stories, still occupies the boards, though it was produced early in the year, a fact that looks promising for the coming adaptation of the story by M. Dennery, which is soon to be produced in Paris under the title

of *Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant*. The Alhambra is occupied by an Italian company, who are giving performances of Italian versions of the familiar works of MM. Offenbach and Lecocq. Thus there is nothing in the present doings of the Madrid theatres that calls for detailed notice; but as the month of September will probably not pass without a revival of theatrical activity, we may take this opportunity of casting a hasty glance at the more salient features of the season of 1877-8. Early in the season, a remarkable work from the pen of Don José Echegarray was produced at the Teatro Español, under the title of *Lo que no puede decirse*, but certain defects of construction and the improbabilities of the plot outweighed the merits of clever character drawing, and of the masterly elaboration of the more passionate scenes, and the new play did not attain the success to which its author had long been accustomed. Nor was he happier in a drama produced later in the season at the same house, under the name, *En el pilar y en la cruz*, a gloomy work, the scene of which was laid in the days of the Inquisition. Let us hope that the misfortunes of last season will stimulate Señor Echegarray to fresh exertions, and that he will soon produce something worthier of his reputation. Perhaps the greatest success attained by the leading theatre last season was that which attended the production of *Consuelo*, a new comedy by Señor Ayala, who had almost ceased to be regarded as a contemporary dramatist, having written nothing for the stage since 1861. *Consuelo*, which showed that its author's powers had not been impaired by disuse, was a work of excellent moral tendency, and had it appeared after *Les Fourchambault*, we should have suspected the dramatist of drawing inspiration from M. Augier; not that there is any similarity in the plot of the two pieces, but they both teach the same moral lesson, and fortunately for their prospects on the stage, they do so in a thoroughly dramatic manner. We may also mention among the successes of the Teatro Español a curious piece by Señor Cano, entitled *Los Laureles de un Poeta*, in which the author sought to illustrate the pernicious effects of the sensational drama of the present day. The Teatro de la Comedia produced a large number of comedies, for the greater part in verse, the most successful proceeding from the fluent pen of Don Eusebio Blasco, a clever playwright and a brilliant writer, but rather addicted to *risqué* situations. He thoroughly knows his audience, however, and never inculcates such loose morality as Hennequin, the production of whose *Bébé*, in its Spanish form of *El Chiquitin de la Casa*, caused much offence to the frequenters of the Comedia. Some of the writers who supplied this house with plays during the past season distinguished themselves by the production of "new and original" comedies, which turned out to be pretty close versions of well-known French pieces, but the castigation inflicted upon them by the press was so severe that we may hope the offence will not be repeated in a hurry.

The Teatro de la Zarzuela, as usual, devoted itself almost exclusively to opera-bouffe in Spanish, most of the works produced being adaptations from the French, and none of the original Spanish works being of any importance. Lecocq's *Marjolaine* and Planquette's *Cloches de Corneville* were the principal additions made during the

season to the existing repertory. Of the minor theatres it is needless to speak, nor does the history of the opera season at the Teatro Real present any event deserving of notice in a brief review of the salient features of the past theatrical year.

IN NEW YORK.

There are no theatrical events of importance to be recorded this month, but a brief account of what may be done in the course of the ensuing season may prove of interest. Though the promised novelties have not as yet been advertised, they seem likely to attract considerable attention. There will be what are called preliminary seasons at three houses: Wallack's, the Union-Square, and Booth's. The *pièce de résistance* at the first will be an adaptation by Mr. Boucicault of *Clarissa Harlowe*, which has already been seen on the stage in various shapes. Miss Davenport will appear at the Union-Square Theatre as Olivia. The great feature at Booth's will be *Jane Shore*, with Miss Geneviève Ward as the heroine. Let us now pass to what may be termed the regular season. The Union-Square, we are told, "will endeavour to maintain its well-earned position as a centre of drama of society, although not in the same manner as last year." Mr. Palmer has secured a new play by M. Sardou, which will be translated for, rather than adapted to the New York stage. It is to be preceded, however, by a comedy by Mr. Bronson Howard, called *First Love*. Hitherto "native talent" has been disregarded, and the manager of the Union-Square intends to produce some American plays in order to ascertain how far it may be relied upon. The company includes Miss Agnes Booth, Mr. Charles Thorne, jun., Miss Jewett, Mr. Parselle, and Miss Dietz. Wallack's Theatre is strong in the possession of Mr. and Miss Coghlan and Mr. John Gilbert. The programme for the season there has not yet been resolved upon, but it may be stated that the manager will continue the policy of bringing out pieces in rapid succession. *Clarissa Harlowe*, in which Mr. and Miss Coghlan will play the principal characters, having been disposed of, the theatre will reopen in October with a new Irish piece by Mr. Boucicault, who heads the cast. *Jane Shore* will give place at Booth's to *Henry VIII.*, with Miss Ward as Katharine and Mr. George Vandenhoff as Wolsey. The Shaksperean play, in its turn, will be succeeded by one or two of Racine's tragedies, represented as originally written, and with Miss Ward in characters associated with the memory of Rachel. Miss Kate Claxton opens the Lyceum with a version of *Les Fourchambault*, and the Park starts with Mr. Bronson Howard's play—entirely new to a New York audience—of *Hurricanes*. In December Mr. Sothern will reappear here, possibly in *Engaged*. The Grand Opera House will at first rely upon M. Joaquin Miller's *Danites*, and Niblo's Theatre on an Irish piece. The programme of the St. James's Theatre, now under the management of Mr. Hart, will consist of farces, light comedies, and burlesque. The provincial managers show far more enterprise than their brethren in New York. Madame Modjeska appears at Philadelphia on the 16th of the present month, and on the 23rd will be followed by Miss Clara Morris. Mr. J. T.

Raymond will be at Cincinnati on the 9th, Mr. M'Cullough at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 16th, Mr. John E. Owens at Detroit on the 7th October, and Mr. Jefferson at St. Louis on the 14th. Not to speak of Miss Morris and Madame Modjeska, it would not be foolish to predict that in the new characters he has lately assumed Mr. Jefferson would fill the largest of the New York Theatres for the whole of the season.

IN SAN FRANCISCO.

At the end of June, as was briefly announced in the last number of *The Theatre*, Mr. George Rignold appeared at the California Theatre in *Henry V.* "This part," says the *Chronicle*, "Mr. Rignold has made his own by special fitness of mind and person. He comes back very little changed. He is a trifle more of a mannerist, which may be partly in seeming, as the peculiarities of the best actor pall with too many repetitions. The manly qualities of the character, and the simple, straightforward nature of the lines, with their freedom from the deep philosophy that sometimes encumbers Shaksperean dialogue, suit him well. The martial speeches he delivers with the boldness and simplicity of a warrior, and he looks every inch a hero and a king. His love-making in the last act is too boisterous, even for the rough and hearty young monarch. A bluff soldier in the ranks might so approach his lady-love, but hardly a king. His failure to moderate his full and powerful voice to suit the place is a fault which a little experience will correct." *Henry V.* was withdrawn early in July to make way for *Diplomacy*, with Mr. Montague as Julian Beauclerc, Miss Maude Granger as Dora, Mr. Shannon as Baron Stein, and Mr. Warde as Orloff. The *Chronicle* points out that, as adapted for the London stage, the piece "maintains throughout a moral and intellectual elevation grateful to that class of theatre-goers who long ago became tired of the pruriency of French plays and satiated with their sensationalism. Mr. Montague," adds the *Chronicle*, "is an intelligent and finished actor, graceful in movement, easy in dialogue, and natural in everything. He is not great, but he has the art of accomplishing all that he desires, and never attempting more than he is able to accomplish. He has gained in force since his former visit. His theory accepted, he always acts with effect. Whether a man would, on hearing of his wife's dishonour, be emotional in Mr. Montague's manner, and fall limp and fainting into the arms of a brother conveniently placed to receive him, is a question for more mature consideration. There are men and men, and their methods of showing grief or evincing chivalrous feeling may be widely different. However this may be, Mr. Montague's acting in the scene where his bride is accused by Count Orloff, in that where he recovers her letter from the Baron Stein, and in the later interview with his wife, was not only forcible but full of intelligent points and delicate *finesse*. All the acting in other scenes and by other persons was carefully finished and elaborate." The run of the comedy was interrupted on the 11th August by the death of Mr. Montague, caused by heart disease.

Echoes from the Green-Room.

THE loss which Madame Nilsson has sustained in America has been much exaggerated. It does not exceed £10,000, or about a seventh part of the fortune she has amassed.

THE controversy as to the relations of Lord and Lady Byron will be reopened in a few weeks by the publication of a memoir of the Rev. Francis Hodgson, one of the poet's closest friends. The book contains several letters from Mrs. Leigh.

THE grave of Goethe's mother at Frankfort has been restored, and the Crown Princess of Germany is expected to visit it during her stay at Homburg.

THE marriage of Mdlle. Albani and Mr. Ernest Gye was solemnised at the Roman Catholic church in Warwick-street on the 6th ult. The ceremony was strictly private, no one being present but the nearest relatives of the bride and bridegroom.

DUBLIN society is sadly scandalised by the announcement that Richard Purdon, son of an Alderman and ex-Lord Mayor, has taken to the stage, and become low comedian at a local theatre.

MR. BYRON says that Platonic love is like all other tonics—very exciting.

THE *Celestial Empire*, speaking of M. Emile Augier's last comedy, says:—"A new play at the Théâtre Français, the *Première of the Fourchambault*, has been," &c.

THERE was a pleasant interchange of courtesies between Sir James Ingham and Miss Goodall lately, when the latter appeared as a witness at Bow-street. "I hope, Miss Goodall, that I have not wearied you?" said the magistrate, with his most beaming smile and in his suavest tones, after putting some questions to her. "On the contrary, Sir James," replied the actress promptly, "it is a pleasure to hear you speak."

DURING his visit to Northampton, Mr. Irving related an amusing anecdote. Ten years ago, while passing with Mr. Toole through Stratford-on-Avon, he saw a rustic sitting on a fence. "That's Shakspere's house, isn't it?" he asked, pointing to the building. "Yes." "Ever been there?" "No." "How long has he been dead?" "Don't know." "Many people come here?" "Yes; lots." "Been to the house?" "No; never been to the house." "What did he do?" "Don't know." "Brought up here?" "Yes." "Did he write anything like the *Family Herald*, or anything of that sort?" "O, yes; he writ." "What was it? You must know." "Well," said the rustic, "I think he wrote for the Bible."

A CELEBRATED composer wrote to a friend, requesting the pleasure of his company "to luncheon; key of G." His friend, a thorough musician, interpreted the invitation rightly, and came to the composer's house for a luncheon at One sharp.

"THE moon is always just the same," he said languidly; "and yet I always find some new beauty in it." "It 's just so with the theatre," she replied. He took the hint.

MDLLE. SARAH BERNHARDT has received an order for several of her statues to be placed in the Casino of Monaco, on the enlargement and decoration of which a large amount is to be expended.

MADAME ADELINA PATTI will appear at Berlin at the end of November, and at Hamburg in January.

IT is not certain that the *Corsican Brothers* will be revived at the Lyceum Theatre next season. Mr. Irving's provincial tour commences in September.

MADAME RISTORI, it is said, will shortly give a series of performances at the San Carlo, Lisbon.

BETWEEN the termination of her provincial tour and her reappearance at the Court Theatre, Miss Ellen Terry will take a brief holiday.

MADAME ETELKA GERSTER is in Paris, and in the course of a month will proceed to America. Next spring she will return to London, not only to sing, but also, we believe, to give evidence for the plaintiff in the case of Davison *v.* Labouchere.

DRURY LANE reopens on the 28th September. The manager has accepted a new play by Mr. Wills, in which Miss Wallis will appear.

MR. PHELPS' health is re-established.

MR. SOTHERN arrived in New York on the 28th ult. on the White Star steamer *Adriatic*. News of his coming reaching his professional friends when he left England, arrangements were made for welcoming him on his arrival, and early in the morning a party of some thirty gentlemen, led by Mr. John T. Raymond, went down the bay in a tug to meet the *Adriatic* at quarantine. Mr. Sothern, after receiving the congratulations of his friends, went with Mr. Raymond and other friends to Delmonico's, rather astonishing the *habitués* of that establishment by appearing in a heavy winter ulster. His right hand still bore marks of the burning received in putting out a fire in his dining-hall in London. His trip was not a business one in any sense, but merely for the purpose of securing rest and recreation. He is now in London again.

MISS FOWLER had a dance party at the Royalty Theatre on the last night of her first season there. Miss Helen Barry, Mr. Vezin, Madame Dolaro, Mr. Flockton, Mrs. Leigh Murray, the Hon. L. Wingfield, Mr. Delacher, Mr. Charles Warner, Mr. Alfred Thompson, and many others were present. The sun was high in the heavens when the dancing ceased.

In Mr. Gilbert's version of *Faust*, now being prepared for the Olympic, Mr. Neville will appear as Faust, Miss Marion Terry as Marguerite, and Mr. Flockton as Mephistopheles.

Mr. William Farren joins the Lyceum company next winter.

Miss Lydia Foote takes the place of Miss Bella Pateman in *Proof*.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal's proposed trip to America has been postponed. There has been a difficulty about terms.

Rienzi may be revived next season at the Royal Italian Opera.

Les Fourchambault is to be adapted for the Haymarket Theatre. Mr. Warner and Mr. Terriss will play the brothers.

Mr. Hermann Vezin will succeed Mr. Neville as Pierre Lorance in *Proof*.

The Adelphi has in rehearsal an adaptation of a new piece by M. Sardou, not yet played.

Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, Miss Fowler, and Miss Fanny Josephs have left London for the Continent.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Marshall are now at their villa in the Lake district.

Mr. Charles Coghlan is in London, but will return to New York in a few weeks.

By the River, a comedietta by Mr. J. W. Jones, will shortly be produced by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal.

Mrs. Huntley and Mr. Rignold will appear in the *Two Orphans* at the Olympic.

Miss and Mr. Pateman and Mr. Kelly join the company engaged by Mr. John S. Clarke to appear in Mr. Byron's new comedy at the Haymarket. The *première* is fixed for the 16th inst.

The comedietta which has been written for Mr. W. H. Vernon by Mr. Evelyn Jerrold, and will be brought out at the Strand Theatre this autumn, bears the title of *Cæsar's Wife*.

The story which Mr. Gerald Dixon contributes to the present number of *The Theatre* is being turned by the author into a two-part comedietta. Miss May ought to be a "thankful" character.

Mr. John Brougham, who has been seriously ill, is writing his life.

Mr. Albery has been engaged to write the Christmas piece for the Alhambra.

Carmen will probably be revived during the autumn season, and if it is, the principal part will, in the absence of Miss Minnie Hauk, be played by Madame Trebelli. *Mireille* and *La Forza del Destino* are also to be played.

Mr. Barry Sullivan starts on another provincial tour on the 23rd September.

Mr. Wybert Reeve sails for the Antipodes at the end of August. Mr. Reeve has purchased the sole Colonial right of representing *Diplomacy*, *Engaged*, and *All for Her*, besides taking with him his own popular adaptation of *No Name*, *George Geith*, and *The Woman in White*. Mr. Wybert Reeve commences his tour through Australia, New Zealand, and California in October.

Mr. J. G. Taylor is going to America.

Mr. Emmett returns to America on the conclusion of his engagements in England, which will not occupy many weeks.

Mr. Savile Clarke's charming comedy of *Love Wins* has been played with considerable success at the Strand.

H.M.S. Pinafore is going on a cruise in the provinces.

The child of Mr. and Mrs. Rousby has, by an order of Mr. Justice Manisty, been confided to the care of Miss Dowse, the mother having the right of access from time to time.

M. Pierre Newski, the author of *Les Danischeff*, has written a piece called *Les Borowski*. It was originally intended for the Comédie Française, but as it could not have been brought out there for some time, the author has transferred it to the Ambigu, where it will be represented in the autumn. The period selected is that of the Polish Insurrection of 1863, which forms the background of the play.

Polyeucte will probably be brought out on the 15th September.

Le Fils Naturel and *Mercadet* are in rehearsal at the Comédie Française. The second will be played before the first.

Nos Bons Villageois is to be revived at the Gymnase.

The Théâtre Lyrique is rehearsing the Marquis d'Ivry's opera, *Les Amants de Vérone*. M. Capoul, at whose instance the work was accepted, is very busy behind the scenes.

It is not probable that the Théâtre Italien will be reopened next winter. During the last season M. Léon Escudier paid 236,000 f. to his principal pensionnaires—110,000 f. to Mdlle. Albani, 46,000 f. to Mdlle. Sanz, 30,000 f. to Madame Durand, and 50,000 f. to M. Pandolfini. With such a salary list it is a matter of extreme difficulty for a manager to keep his head above water.

Though the success of *Le Capitaine Fracasse* is beyond question, the piece has been withdrawn for the present—in the first place on account of the illness of M. Melchissedec, and in the next on account of the tropical heat.

MM. Delacour and Mancel have just read at the Vaudeville a portion of a new comedy in three acts.

Miss Mary Anderson is in Paris.

The Théâtre du Château d'Eau reopens with a drama in five acts and eight tableaux, entitled *Une Erreur Judiciaire.*

The Bouffes reopens on the fifty-second anniversary of the establishment of the theatre.

Mdlle. Reichemberg, of the Comédie Française, has just bought a charming little hotel at Villa Saïd for 50,000 francs. It is an occasion for saying to her, *macte virtute.*

The season at the Frankfort Opera House will be opened with *Robin Hood,* a new opera by Herr Dietrich.

The Stadttheater at Hamburg is to be purchased by the Municipality.

A new opera, *Meister Martin der Küfer,* by Herr Weissheimer, will shortly be produced at Carlsruhe.

The Sound of the Bells of Notre Dame, the libretto founded upon Victor Hugo's novel, and the music by Conrad Nordquist, is to be brought out at Stockholm.

L'Africaine is running at Seville.

The *Academy* announces the death of Hilarion Eslava, the Spanish composer, at the age of seventy-one. He was chapel-master to the King and director of the Conservatoire at Madrid. His reputation was gained alike by his contributions to the church and the opera, but none of his larger works have been, so far as we are aware, introduced in this country.

Mr. Joseph Jefferson has engaged to appear as Rip Van Winkle at the Fifth-Avenue Theatre this winter. Until then he will enjoy his holiday. The engagement commences in December.

Mr. Jefferson has been playing St. Germain's part in "Baby" at San Francisco. By the way, the adapter of this rather broad comedy renames one of the characters Howard St. Paul, which exactly expresses the patronymic of a well-known entertainment giver, minus the saint.

The new play which Mr. Tom Taylor has written for Miss Bessie Darling deals with Russian life.

Mr. Stephen Fiske is spending the summer with Mr. D. H. Harkins at Larchmont Manor.

Mr. John M'Cullough has been engaged at the Fifth-Avenue for the spring season.

Mr. Archie Gordon has prepared for Miss Louise Pomeroy another version of the *Vicar of Wakefield.*

It is in contemplation to found an association in New York under the title of "The American Dramatic Authors' Society," with the object of encouraging the production of original plays, and regulating the present practice of competitive translation from the French and German. As the *Academy* points out, nothing is suggested for the protection of the rights of English authors.

MR. IRVING EN VACANCE.

ON the 8th August, Mr. Irving gave readings at the Town Hall, Northampton, in aid of the fund for the restoration of Hartwell Church. The programme comprised "The Feast of Belshazzar," "The Captive," scenes from *Hamlet*, *Richard III.*, and *David Copperfield*, and the "Dream of Eugene Aram." In the first-mentioned piece, the *Northampton Herald* says: "Mr. Irving's elocution was stately and impressive, while, in depicting the terror of the Babylonian monarch, he evinced somewhat of the tragic power which has made his name famous. His forte is tragedy; but that he has no inconsiderable command of comedy was proved by his reading of the colloquy between David Copperfield and the waiter. The reading of the scene from *Richard III.* was doubtless a great treat to those who had never heard Mr. Irving before; but those who have not seen him at the Lyceum can have but a faint notion of his capabilities as an actor." The readings ended, Mr. Irving was invited by the Shakspere Society to what proved to be a most agreeable supper party in the Council Chamber. Captain Harvey and several clergymen were among the guests. Supper over, Mr. Irving was presented by the Society with a beautifully illuminated address. "To realise the true aspirations of poetic genius, and to give adequate expression to the various emotions of the soul, is," it was said, "the highest triumph of the player. This enviable distinction has been attained by few, and it is most gratifying to know that among the honoured ones your name is unmistakably enrolled. It is the earnest hope of this society that you may live long to grace the art of which you are so distinguished an ornament, and which, as a moral teacher, is so potent, and as an intellectual recreation so fascinating." In presenting the address, the chairman, the Rev. Mr. Sanders, said that, thanks to Mr. Irving's splendid genius, the prospects of the stage at the present moment were very bright. Mr. Irving made a graceful speech in reply. What he had done, he said, had not been very much, but he assured them that he had done it with a reverent desire to get at the core of the poet's meaning. An actor might be very dignified and very declamatory, but unless he endeavoured to lay bare the springs of the character he represented his work would be of but little use. The stage was governed by traditions compared with which the laws of the Medes and Persians were very elastic; but it was possible, he supposed, even in these degenerate days, to throw some new light on the poet's meaning; and, although the persons who attempted that might be

looked upon by many people as rather dangerous characters, such an endorsement as they had been given that evening of the contrary opinion could not be otherwise than gratifying.

On the following Monday Mr. Irving laid the foundation of the Harborne and Edgbaston Institute, and on the completion of the ceremony was entertained at luncheon in the Birmingham Masonic Hall. Here, as at Harborne, an illuminated address was presented to him. "We esteem it a great privilege," the committee said, "to associate your name with our undertaking—a name which so worthily stands in the front rank of dramatic art. We trust you may be long spared to adorn the profession you have adopted, and to continue your praiseworthy endeavours to elevate the drama to its high and proper position. Amidst these arduous duties may you still find time to assist those who, like ourselves, may be desirous of increasing the sources of mental and rational enjoyment, and of knitting communities together in closer bonds of fellowship and goodwill." Mr. Irving, in reply, said he was not only gratified but deeply moved by the cordiality of the greeting which they had given to him. It was not for him to speak in detail to them of the course of study to be pursued at their institute; but, speaking as an actor—and they would see it was as difficult for the player as for the professor to forget his calling for five minutes—he was glad to know that they would not leave out of their culture that legitimate development of the imagination without which life was but a dry routine. If we did not idealise something, this would be a painfully prosaic world. Poetry and fiction did much to lighten care. For many persons the drama did more: it sometimes helped many, especially the poor and unlettered, to a right appreciation of life. He was recently, for a short time, at Mr. Rogers's theatre in Birmingham, and one could not help being struck to see the earnest and even revengeful manner in which the gallery expressed their dislike of the villain of the piece. He thought that was a homely and wholesome lesson for those who thought there was no good influence in the theatre. What sensible men had to do was, not to make futile attempts to destroy an institution which was bound up with some of the best instincts of human nature, but to strive to remove its abuses and elevate its tone. Far above the merits of any individual actor there was this consideration, that if he aimed at the highest standard of his profession, he helped thousands to a fellowship, sympathy, and intelligence with the great mind which gave to the drama its noblest form. But some persons said: "Oh! we think Shakspere very admirable, and if you played nothing else but his works at every theatre, we should be delighted to support you." It seemed to him that one might almost as well

say: "If every book of poetry I take up has not the lofty inspiration of Milton, I must refuse to support poetry." It was impossible for Shakspere to be played in every theatre, for many obvious reasons. In all its many phases, art had something that was excellent. The Chairman, Mr. Timmins, said Mr. Irving belonged to a profession which, like many others, was remarkable for narrowness —a profession which required absolute devotion if excellence in it were to be attained. In the course of an extensive knowledge of players and acting, he did not remember any instance of an actor who had gone beyond the bounds of his profession to give direct and personal interest in literary and scientific institutions as Mr. Irving had done. That seemed to be a very important incident in the history of our time, because it showed that a great deal of the old prejudice against the stage was dying away. For Mr. Irving there was something beyond the footlights and the green-room.

Three days afterwards Mr. Irving gave some readings at the Ulster Hall, Belfast, for a charitable object. The programme was similar to that selected at Northampton. "In reading," the *Belfast News Letter* says, "Mr. Irving depends upon the inflection of his voice and the mobility of his features. Now and again such a simple action as the natural and untheatrical motion of a hand to the forehead was made; and now and again the fingers clutching involuntarily at the desk gave a suggestion of intensity of passion that was more effective because no more than a suggestion. Indeed, the groundwork of Mr. Irving's art, like that of all the other arts, seems to be suggestiveness, and the secret of the success of this element upon which he depends is not hard to fathom. The fact is, that the appeal to the imagination which is made in this way is limited only by the imagination of the various members of an audience, and the more intellectual the members are the more certain it is of success. The artists who appeal directly to the grosser senses of an audience, and do not leave anything to be carried on and considered in these outer realms of imagination, must of necessity achieve less, the senses which are susceptible of immediate impression being of definite limits. Mr. Irving is himself by far the most imaginative actor alive—and, in fact, we do not hear a great deal of the imagination of the actors of the past generation—and the reason that his success is in proportion to the intelligence of his audiences is simply because the marvellous poetry of his fancy is most fully appreciated by those who are endowed most liberally with a similar gift. No artist gives an audience so much to think about as Mr. Irving, and at the same time no artist approaches him in the power of expressing the individuality of a character—the trifling details which cause a character to be recognised."

Books.

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.*

FOR some time the appearance of a biography of Miss Cushman has been awaited with something like impatience by those who witnessed her achievements and take an interest in the higher work of the stage. That she was an actress of genius is beyond dispute, and even in this country her name is inseparably associated in the minds of old playgoers with Meg Merrilies, Bianca, Romeo, and one or two other parts. Destitute of any personal attractions save a symmetrical figure and expressive eyes, she carried her audience away by the sheer force of the soul and spirit which she threw into her acting, and the mark she has left upon the annals of the English and American stage can hardly be effaced. But it was not only as an actress that Miss Cushman claimed our admiration. Her life throughout was pure and noble; in all her social relations, whether as a daughter, a sister, a friend, or a benefactor, she appeared to signal advantage. Though she had not had a liberal education, her conversation indicated keen intelligence and extensive knowledge, as those who gathered round her in Bolton-row or the Via Gregoriana must have seen. In all respects, indeed, she dignified the profession of which she was a member, and a narrative of her life has been eagerly demanded. The book before us, we fear, will disappoint many expectations. Miss Stebbins eulogises her heroine *ad nauseam*, fails to arrange her materials in anything like an effective manner, and does not succeed in drawing a very striking portrait. For all that her work is welcome, since it contains a good deal of information which but for her reverent care we might never have possessed.

Descended on her father's side from Robert Cushman, one of the men who in 1609 quitted England and settled abroad on account of their religion, Miss Cushman was born in Richmond-street, Boston, on the 23rd July, 1816. Her father, Elkanah Cushman, was a merchant on Long-wharf. In her own expressive words, she was "born a tom-boy," and her earliest recollections are of climbing trees and roaming over the wharf and warehouse with her brother. In the

* *Charlotte Cushman: her Letters and Memories of her Life.* Edited by Emma Stebbins. (London: Trübner & Co.)

ordinary occupations of her sex she took but little interest; with a box of tools she could "do anything." Before long she displayed a singular turn for imitating the peculiarities of persons about her, together with much warmth of imagination. Two circumstances served to nourish these faculties. Her mother's brother, a seafaring man, used to take her to the play when he was on shore, and the family became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. William Pelby, of the Tremont Theatre. The first piece Charlotte saw was *Coriolanus*, with Mr. Macready in the principal character. In the result she was seized with a passion for the stage, and we hear of her playing Selim in the operetta of *Bluebeard* to an admiring but rather scanty audience in the attic of her father's house. Reverses in business obliged Mr. Cushman to remove to Charlestown, and Charlotte was placed at a public school. There she remained until she was thirteen years of age; but, as she possessed a fine contralto voice, her musical education was kept up for some time afterwards. At length, finding it necessary, on account of her father's poverty, to do something for her own living, she appeared at the Tremont Theatre as the Countess Almaviva in the *Marriage of Figaro*, and Lucy Bertram in *Guy Mannering*. From Tremont she went to New Orleans, where, owing either to change of climate or a severe strain, her voice began to fail. In this emergency she became an actress, appearing as Lady Macbeth with considerable success. From New Orleans she went to New York; the manager of the Bowery Theatre at once engaged her for three years, and the favourable verdict of the New Orleans audience was endorsed. With characteristic generosity, the first thing she did was to provide a home for her mother and other members of her family. The Bowery Theatre having been burnt down, she went to the Albany. In 1837, perceiving that "no one could navigate a ship unless he had learned his trade before the mast," she took the to her comparatively humble position of walking lady at the Park Theatre, and during her engagement there, which lasted three years, left no stone unturned to master the secrets of her art. In 1842 she undertook the management of the Walnut-street Theatre at Philadelphia, but gave it up in order to have the advantage of acting with Mr. Macready in New York. Her genius then shone forth with irresistible effect; at times, indeed, the great English tragedian seemed to hold a secondary place in the performance.

Flushed with her success, she set out for England in the autumn of 1844. Her purse was not heavy, and it is related that for some time after her arrival in London she and her maid lived upon a mutton-chop a day. Early one morning, before visiting time, the manager of the Princess's Theatre was seen impatiently walking up and down the street in which she lived. "He is anxious: good;

I can make my own terms." Her sagacity was not at fault; an engagement was entered into with him, and on the 14th February, 1845, she appeared as Bianca in *Fazio*. Her triumph was one of the proudest which the annals of the English stage can exhibit. "The great characteristics of Miss Cushman," wrote Mr. Oxenford in *The Times*, "are her earnestness, her intensity, her quick apprehension of 'readings,' her power to dart from one emotion to another with the greatest rapidity, as if carried on by impulse alone. The early part of the play affords an audience no criterion of what an actress can do; but from the instant she suspects that her husband's affections are wavering, and with a flash of horrible enlightenment exclaims: 'Fazio, thou hast seen Aldobella!' Miss Cushman's career was certain. The variety which she threw into the dialogue with her husband—from jealousy dropping back into tenderness, from hate passing to love, while she gave an equal intensity to each successive passion, as if her whole soul were for the moment absorbed in that only—was astonishing. The crowning effort was the supplication to Aldobella, when the wife, falling on her knees, makes the greatest sacrifice of her pride to save the man she has destroyed. Nothing could exceed the determination with which, lifting her clasped hands, she urged her suit—making offer after offer to her proud rival, as if she could not give too much, and feared to reflect on the value of her concessions—till at last, repelled by the cold Marchioness, and exhausted by her own passion, she sank huddled into a heap at her feet. Of the whole after-part of the drama, which was distinguished throughout by sustained energy, this was her great triumph. For passion—real, impetuous, irresistible passion—she has not at present her superior. Miss Cushman was received at the end of the play with showers of bouquets; never were bouquets more richly merited." The *Sun* said that since the first appearance of Edmund Kean there had never been such a début on the boards of an English theatre; high praise indeed. The actress essayed other characters in tragedy with similar or more conspicuous success; the versatility of her talents was put beyond doubt by her impersonation of Rosalind and other parts belonging to the domain of light and graceful comedy. "For the present," writes a friend in May, "she is the greatest creature in London." Invitations poured in upon her; authors respectfully submitted plays in manuscript to her; artists vied with each other for the honour of painting her portrait. In the following winter, at the Haymarket, she played Romeo to the Juliet of her sister Susan, who had followed her from America. "It is enough to say," writes Mr. Oxenford, "that the Romeo of Miss Cushman is far superior to any Romeo we have ever had. The distinction is not one of degree, it is one of

kind. For a long time Romeo had been a convention. Miss Cushman's Romeo is a creation, a living, breathing, animated, ardent human being. The memory of playgoers will call up Romeo as a collection of speeches, delivered with more or less eloquence, but as an individual Miss Cushman has given the vivifying spark whereby the fragments are knit together and become an organised entirety. Miss Cushman looks Romeo exceedingly well: her deportment is frank and easy; she walks the stage with an air of command; her eye beams with animation." "Unanimous and lavish as were the encomiums of the Press," wrote Sheridan Knowles, "I was not prepared for such a triumph of pure genius. You recollect, perhaps, Kean's third act of *Othello*. Did you ever expect to see anything like it again? I never did, and yet I saw as great a thing last Wednesday night in Romeo's scene with the Friar." In Meg Merrilies her acting was so intense and splendid that Madame Vestris "turned cold."

From this point we need give only a brief sketch of Miss Cushman's career. In all directions she made life-long friends, including Mr. Carlyle, Eliza Cook, Samuel Rogers, Miss Jewsbury, and Henry F. Chorley. In 1849, after having gone on a most remunerative tour of the English provinces, she went over to America, but did not stay there very long. In the autumn of 1852 she paid her first visit to Rome, the city she was to know so well in after years. In 1854, while fulfilling an engagement in London, she took a house in Bolton-row, Mayfair, where for some years she dispensed "the most charming and genial hospitality." The most distinguished artists and writers of the time were to be found in her drawing-room. In 1856, when Madame Ristori first came to England, a dinner was given in her honour by the American actress, and from that time they were fast friends. Miss Cushman's energy appeared to be inexhaustible. She acted frequently, and was able to meet the most trying demands upon her leisure. In the winter of 1856-7 she revisited Rome. "No salon," Miss Stebbins says, "seemed complete without her. There was a winning charm about her far above mere beauty of feature, a wondrous charm of expression and sympathy which took all hearts and disarmed criticism. She had, moreover, many of the requisites for real beauty—a fine, stately presence, a movement always graceful and impressive, a warm, healthy complexion, beautiful wavy chesnut hair, and the finest eyes in the world. The harmonious combination in her personality of great intellectual force with extreme social geniality produced an attraction that was irresistible." In private life there was nothing of the actress about her, and her generosity was such that many a blessing was invoked upon her head. In 1858 she made a tour of the United States, and

on returning to Europe fixed her residence at Rome. Her house was No. 38, Via Gregoriana, commanding a view of St. Peter's. In 1859, 1861, and 1863 she again crossed the ocean, the last time to play for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission. In 1866, while she was at Rome, her malady first made its appearance, and its ravages, if anything, were accelerated by grief at the deaths of her sister and her mother. As her strength declined her mental energy seemed to increase, and during the last six years of her life she gave the "readings" which added so much to her already splendid reputation. It was significantly remarked on one occasion:—"I much prefer hearing Miss Cushman read to seeing her act, because in the readings she is so well supported." As Miss Stebbins says, "Such a combination of fine presence, noble voice, perfect delivery, and admirable elocution has seldom been brought to bear upon the productions of Shakspere," in which, as in other pieces, she demonstrated her command of passion and humour, of tenderness, delicate comedy, and pathos. The malady to which we have referred was now increasing to an alarming extent, but in 1871 she acted at Booth's Theatre, New York, and subsequently at Boston. The latter city had never appreciated her at her right value, probably on the principle that a man is never recognised as a prophet in his own country. On this occasion, however, her fellow citizens made ample amends for the past, and a school which had been erected on the site of her birthplace received her name. In 1874, after acting and reading more than the state of her health warranted, she took a formal leave of the New York playgoers. The house was crowded from floor to ceiling; the Arcadian Club, through Mr. Bryant, presented her with a crown of laurel, and about 25,000 persons assembled outside to do her honour. Then came farewells of Philadelphia and Boston, followed by more readings. These appear to have exhausted her, and on the 18th February, 1876, she died almost without pain. "There was a time," said the Rev. Henry Foote, of Boston, in a memorial sermon, "when the world sneered at the possibility of virtue in theatrical life, and by the sneer, and what went with it, did its worst to make virtue impossible. It has been given to our generation to show, in lives among which happily our noble townswoman does not stand alone, that a pure spirit can go stainless, as the lady in *Comus*, through corruptions."

DUVERT.*

THE once popular Vaudeville, with the quaint rhymed couplets at the end of each scene, died out a good many years ago, and though

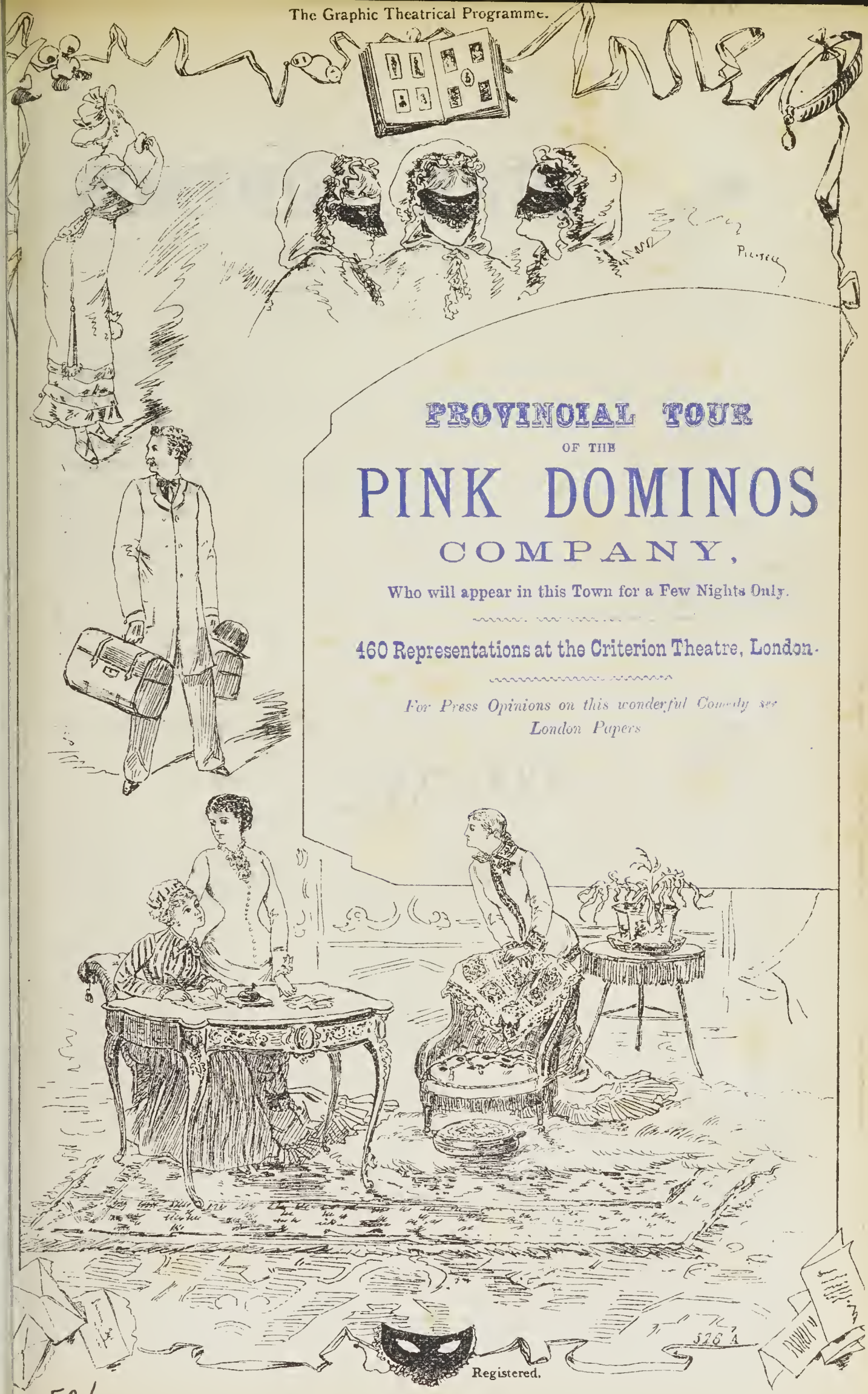
* *Œuvres de Duvert.* Paris: Levy Frères.

efforts have recently been made to revive its popularity, the result has not been very satisfactory. At the Gymnase *matinées* last year several of Scribe's masterpieces in this style were performed, and it was amusing to see how largely those audiences were composed of elderly men, who chuckled over the memories of the past thus pleasantly revived, but the mild mirth excited by the old vaudeville in the morning contrasted curiously with the loud laughter elicited in the evening by a brand-new production of M. Hennequin, perhaps destined to be equally ephemeral, but written in the spirit of the present moment. Felix-Auguste Duvert, in conjunction with Auguste Théodore de Lauzanne—their names were even more inseparable than those of Messrs. Meilhac and Halévy now are—was one of the most prolific writers of the old-fashioned kind of vaudeville to which we have referred, and which flourished well into the second half of the present century. Duvert was a smart little boy looking forward to his sixth birthday when the nineteenth century opened, and it had got through more than three-quarters of its momentous course when the bright old man died, as his literary style had, to his chagrin, done years before. Being one of seven children of a needy draper, young Duvert received but an imperfect education, and while yet a child was put into an office to earn his own livelihood. An ardent admirer of the great Napoleon, he entered the army when the conqueror's fortune had reached its zenith, and the young soldier experienced a little of the hardships but none of the glory of war. His Napoleonic principles forbade him to accept an ensigncy offered him on the accession of Louis XVIII., and leaving the army he entered an insurance office. There he found leisure to cultivate a talent for rhyming, which he had already evinced amongst his military comrades. He was soon advised to try his hand at a vaudeville, and he wrote, in conjunction with a then equally unknown young man, a piece called *Les Frères de Lait*, and sent it in to the Gymnase. There was a martial tone about the piece that fell in with the desire of the monarchy to revive the warlike spirit of France, and owing to this, more than to its own merits, the piece was accepted. But conceive Duvert's stupefaction when at the first performance he found his couplets in honour of the tricolour adapted to the hated white flag. The public, however, applauded, and a young author would have been more than mortal had he proved recalcitrant under such circumstances. This happened in 1824, and it was not till after five or six years of efforts in various fields of dramatic work that Duvert made a real hit. By this time he had become acquainted with Lauzanne, who several years afterwards married Duvert's only daughter, and the two men joined in writing a parody of Victor Hugo's *Hernani*, which was then (in 1830) the

subject of a bitter contest between the classical and romantic schools. *Harnali, ou la contrainte par cor*, as the parody was entitled, had an immense success. We cannot refrain from citing, as a specimen of its style, the lines spoken by old Comilva (Ruy Gomez) in the first act, when he finds the King and Harnali (Hernani) in his niece's chamber:—

"Qu'est-ce à dire? En ces lieux vous introduire ainsi!
Pour un vieux Lustucru me prenez-vous ici?
Suis-je donc un jouet, un homme en pain d'épice,
Que l'on donne aux enfants qui viennent de nourrice?
Suis-je un polichinelle? ou suis-je un chien barbet
Que l'on fait aboyer en pressant le soufflet?
Eh bien! il était temps!—Je vois qu'en ma demeure
Pour savoir du nouveau j'arrive à la bonne heure.
Vous êtes des gaillards qui montrez du toupet.
Ainsi donc, pour vous deux ma nièce me trompait!
C'est du propre! et c'est vous, ma nièce, vous ma femme
(Vous l'alliez devenir) quelle conduite infâme!
Lorsque de notre hymen j'arrange les apprêts,
Je me trouve être avant ce que l'on n'est qu'après!
C'est du propre! Et vraiment dans cette circonstance,
C'est bien aimable à vous de me faire une avance.
Et toi, fille modeste!—oh! mon amour craintif
N'ose plus à ton nom joindre cet adjectif.—
Ah! je me sens mourir de fureur et de honte.
Je sens à mon vieux nez la moutarde qui monte."

Soon after this, Duvert, who was thenceforth inseparable from Lauzanne, fell into the kind of composition with which his name is specially associated, namely, the vaudeville, with rhymed couplets, for which he soon became famous, the great comic actor Arnal being closely associated with all his successes. Of his works, of which no fewer than 121 have been printed, we may say that none keep the stage. *Le Mari de la Dame de Chœurs* was recently revived at the Palais Royal Theatre, but failed to please an audience accustomed to the *gros sel* of M. Gondinet and M. Barrière. *L'Omelette Fantastique* was recently tested, we believe, at another house with no better success. *L'Homme Blasé* is better known in England than in France, owing to the acting of the late Mr. Charles Mathews in *Used Up*, as the English version of the piece is called. Indeed a Paris audience applauded Mr. Mathews in this rôle, associated with the name of Arnal. An edition of selected pieces of Duvert and Lauzanne has just been published in six volumes. Many of the plays are worth preserving, and they are extremely amusing to read, but recent experience is not calculated to encourage Paris managers in producing any of them on the stage.



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Sir Percy Wagstaff (a Man about Town) Mr ARTHUR BUCKLAW
Joskin Tubbs (a dear old Gentleman with a Weakness) Mr HENRY S. DACRE
Henry Greenlanes (a good Young Man) Mr F. W. BELLEW
Brisket (Head Waiter at Cremorne) Mr HARRY RIVERS
First Waiter at Cremorne .. ... Mr PORTLOCK
Second Waiter at Cremorne ... Mr HOWELL
Lady Maggie Wagstaff ... Miss MARIE SIDNEY
Sophia .. (Greythorne's Wife) Miss PAULINE BEAUPRE
Rebecca (a timid Serving Maid) Miss JENNY BEAUVILLE
Mrs Joskin Tubbs (Tubbs's better half) Miss ISOLA MORTON
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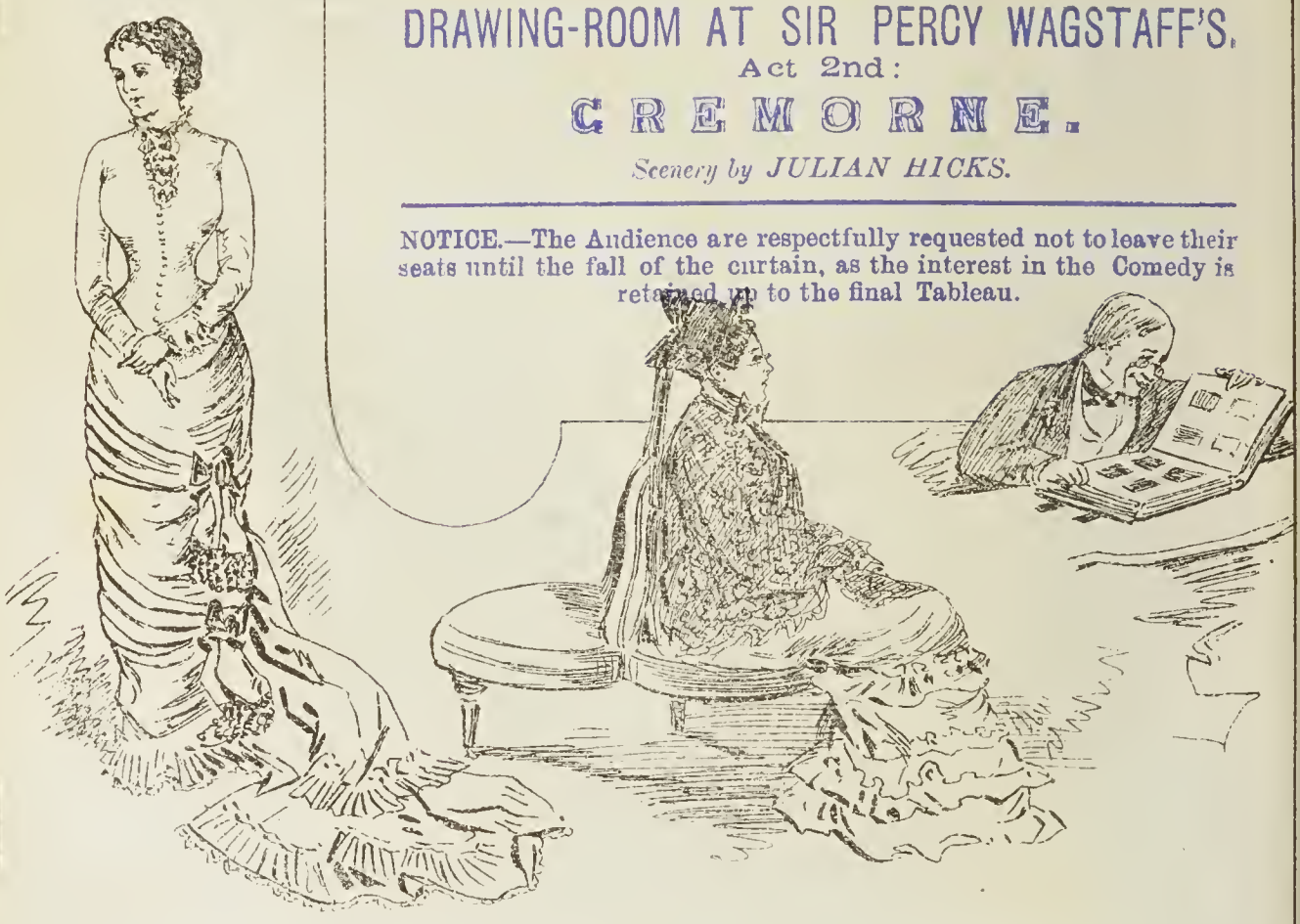

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,, ISOLA MORTON	,, W. F. BELLEW
,, MAUD MELLON	,, HARRY RIVERS
AND	,, PORTLOCK
MISS MARIE SIDNEY.	,, HOWELL
	AND
	MR. HENRY S. DACRE

Stage Manager	MR. HORATIO SAKER
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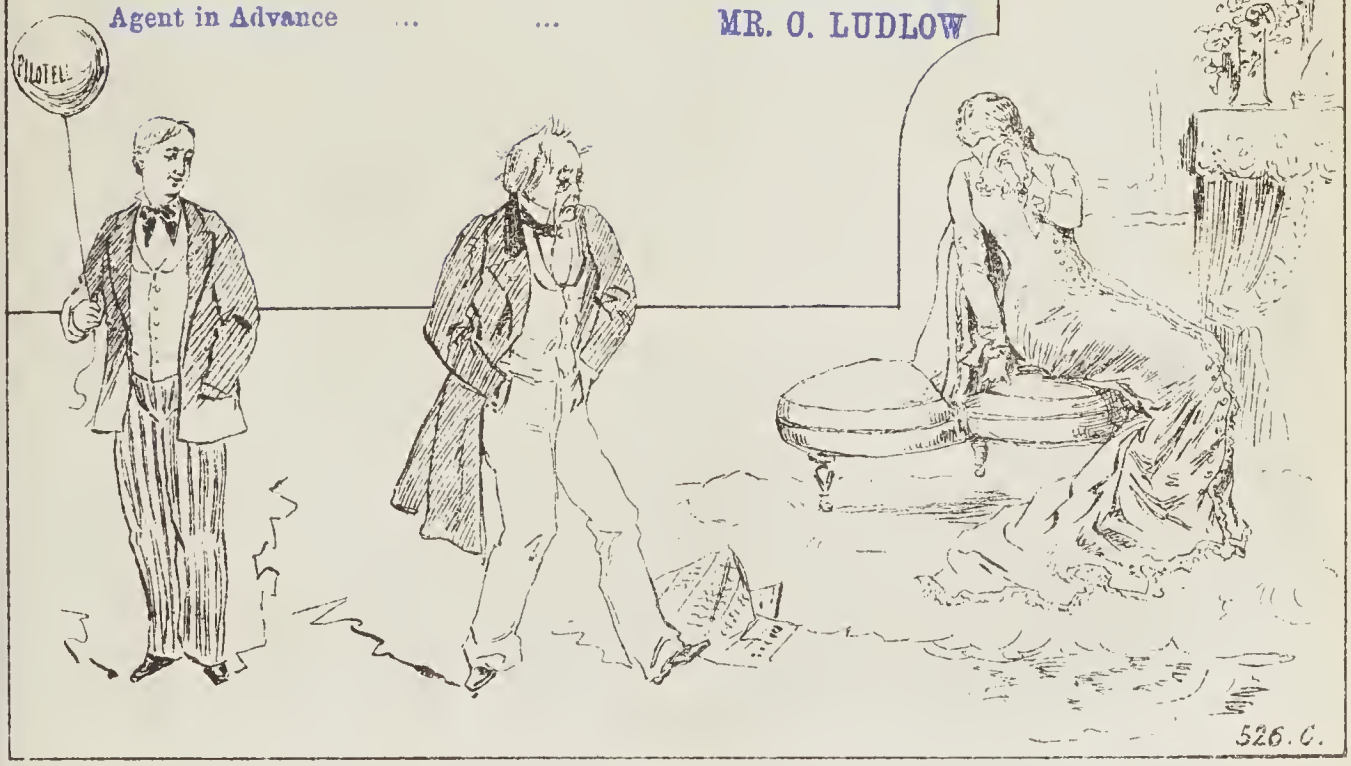

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THE ART PROSPECT AT THE LYCEUM.

THE history of the Lyceum theatre during the past seven years and the recent career of the actor who is about to undertake its management give to the proposed change a special significance and interest beyond that which attaches to the ordinary movements of the theatrical world. Although to those who recollect the programmes which were the order of the day at the Lyceum when that hitherto unlucky house passed into the control of the late Mr. Bateman—the *Fanchettes,* and *Pickwicks,* and the like—it may well seem that the destiny of the theatre was shaped for it not altogether by the deliberate purpose of its ruler, it would be ungrateful indeed to forget the services to the dramatic art of the day which have here been rendered. No catalogue of mere productions, even though more complete than that given by Mrs. Bateman in her farewell address, could convey more than a faint idea of the true extent and meaning of these services. It is a great thing to have secured a run of a couple of hundred nights for one of Shakespeare's noblest plays, and to have given their due prominence to *Othello, Macbeth,* and *Richard III.;* it is a great thing to have made way for Mr. W. G. Wills' eloquent dramatic poetry, and to have presented to the world the first acted play by the Poet-Laureate. But it is a greater to have led the van in revolutionizing the attitude of the thoughtful public towards the stage; to have

attracted to the theatre the audiences most certain to react favourably upon the art by which they are entertained; and to have helped restore the acted drama to the high estimation in which it should be held as a means of culture, and a mental recreation of the purest and mest elevated kind. Without in any way depreciating the concurrent efforts made at other theatres to raise the standard of artistic finish, and to give their due value to poetic sympathy and expression, and without forgetting that the spirit of the age is responsible for the manifestations which afterwards affect it with a reflex influence, we may assuredly credit the chief productions of the Lyceum during the past few years with having effected an incalculable amount of good, both direct and indirect, and with having faithfully served the highest interests of the drama.

Under ordinary circumstances it would inevitably have been matter for profound regret that the management during whose time so much valuable work has been achieved should be in any way changed. The breaking up of the old association, be the practical bearing of that association what it might, would have appeared to be in the last degree inauspicious. But even the pessimists who are prepared to draw an unfavourable augury from anything can scarcely urge with any show of reason that evil is likely to come of the transfer of the reins of management at the Lyceum from the hands of Mrs. Bateman to those of Mr. Irving. It is to this actor's "attraction as an artist" that Mrs. Bateman candidly admits "the prosperity of the theatre" to have been "entirely attributable"; and, on the whole, it must certainly be admitted that the successive undertakings here derived but few of their favourable results from other sources, at any rate so far as concerns the chief players engaged. Mr. Irving, moreover, apart altogether from his relative powers as an actor, has in many ways proved himself to be devoted to the elevation of the art which he has so earnestly studied. The actor who conscientiously respects what he believes to be the intention of his author, who will spare no pains to determine the exact signification of a line or a passage, or a stage direction, and who makes himself acquainted with every available authority upon the subject with which he deals—this player surely shows that he has not a few of the qualities most to be desired in a manager whose efforts, as he himself states, are to be directed not only towards immediate results of pounds, shillings, and pence, but towards the future foundation of a School of Dramatic Art.

Actors have not, as we know, been by any means invariably successful as managers when for one reason or another they have undertaken the new responsibility implied in their experiment; and

there are obviously plenty of rocks upon which the actor-manager may split which do not lie in the course of his rivals. In the first place he, like the editor of a magazine who gives his own serial the place of honour, loses, *ex hypothesi*, one great check upon the merit of his work: he has allowed it to miss the test of submission to the judgment of another. This is if he continues to act himself. If, on the other hand, he, like a popular actor-manager of the present day, fears to be accused of thrusting himself forward and of making his coadjutors' interest subservient to his own, the probability is that the world will be the loser by his self-restraint. Then again, we have known actors who have become managers declare that the sordid cares and anxieties incident to the production of important pieces have ended in almost entirely destroying their love for the actual pursuit of their profession. In some cases the necessary capacity for business, its details and its decisions has been lacking, as it was in the case of the great dramatist who so managed his theatre as to neutralize the brilliant results attained by the success of his own plays. Other causes may lead to such failures as that of Mr. Charles Mathews, who never seemed able to do any good for himself except when he was under some one else's management, and this although the fare offered to the public was under both sets of circumstances the same. In no offensive sense of the words it may be said that on the stage, as elsewhere, the good servant has frequently proved the bad master. With regard to theatrical as well as other undertakings, the advice of the American humourist, "Never prophesy unless you know," holds good: and it would be rash indeed to predict that the new management will accomplish all that we hope from it. But of this much we may safely feel assured: Mr. Irving enters upon his task with the most ambitious of motives, and with a past career and a present position which give the strongest indication—short of actual proof—of his power to accomplish his elevated purpose.

The one step with regard to the coming enterprise which is known to have been taken will be held by those most capable of forming an opinion to give the happiest augury of the method and spirit in which the work is to be carried out. The engagement of Miss Ellen Terry, who fairly heads the list of our emotional actresses, besides having given ample evidence of her command of elocutionary and other more technical resources, may legitimately be held to mean a great deal. It shows that no endeavour is to be spared towards forming at the Lyceum a company which shall be the strongest attainable; it shows that the highest merit—for such we conceive Miss Terry's to be—is appreciated in the most practical manner, and it shows that what is vulgarly known as a

"combination of talent" is not for the future to be reserved only for the representation of drawing-room comedy and for the scratch performance of classical scraps at a morning benefit. Any work upon which artists of the calibre of Mr. Irving and Miss Terry are likely to simultaneously engage, is morally sure to be worthy of the utmost attention, and the suggested association is for many a lover of the theatre the realization of a day-dream which seems almost too good to be true. If in other particulars the new Lyceum company can be strengthened after this fashion, we are assuredly on the high road to the foundation of a school of dramatic art which will afford us both pleasure and pride. For our own part we cannot avoid, and we do not seek to avoid, discovering in the prospect which seems opened out to us by this venture a striking verification of the belief which we expressed in the first number of this magazine, that our stage, in spite of all misfortune and mistake, is "steadily moving onward and upward." We need not profess to doubt that be the practical outcome of the experiment what it may, the future career of the principal actors will belie their past, or that the fair promise given by artistic efforts of days gone by will be falsified in the achievement of days to come.

THE SUNDAY QUESTION AND THE STAGE.

WHEN some short time since an ambiguous report implied that the National Sunday League thought of including theatres in its operations, it was natural enough that some of the supporters of that association, as well as a good many of its opponents, should be a good deal scared by so revolutionary an idea. It was said that the League, which has for its professed object the opening of museums, art-galleries, and libraries on Sunday, besides the delivery of lectures on that day, had now gone so far as to apply to the lessees of a certain theatre to open it on Sundays for theatrical purposes. The move would assuredly be a bold one; but then the enemies of the League have constantly asserted that this Sunday opening of theatres was to be attempted at the earliest practical date, and that its accomplishment was one of the League's most cherished ambitions. This was, it was argued, only the natural outcome of the whole movement, and it would follow, sooner or later, upon the success of an organized profanation of the holy day. Sunday play-going was sure to succeed Sunday lecturing, especially when the lecture was turned into a species of entertainment by an accompaniment of music, however

sacred that music might be. Give a dog a bad name and hang him; and a good many very worthy people were only too ready to abuse the Sunday League for the offence which they so eloquently denounced, and which the League, as a matter of fact, never committed. The secretary of the League promptly wrote to deny that it had ever been intended to use the theatre in question for dramatic purposes on Sunday; all that had been asked for was permission to use the house for the "Sunday Evenings for the People," into which weekly recreation the theatrical element does not enter at all. This specific denial will doubtless be received with widespread satisfaction by those who had honestly feared that recourse was to be had to French custom in this matter, though they may be inclined to hold it significant, and significant of anything but good, that such a question could ever have been raised, even though it were by the awkwardly-worded sentence of a newspaper report. Where there is smoke there must, they will reason, be some sort of fire, though the fire be little more than a flash-in-the-pan; and they may continue to feel a vague uneasiness whenever the subject comes on the *tapis*.

For ourselves we cannot think that there is the slightest reason for alarm, and we believe that the Sunday League, with some of whose objects we cordially sympathize, is to be pitied if the erroneous report gains ground, or even holds the ground which it has gained already. Associations such as that which has brought into being the "Sunday Evenings for the People" have plenty of useful tasks to perform before they attempt that which is—for this generation at all events—impossible. The worst that the bitterest antagonists of the movement could wish is, that any demand, either formal or indirect, should be made for Sunday theatrical performances. Any such proposal would run against the national grain, and would do more to drive legislation back towards the narrow-minded tyranny of the Puritanic Sabbath than hosts of arguments based upon the Fourth Commandment. It is of course true enough that, strictly speaking, permission to open theatres for their ordinary performances on Sunday would be a logical result of any Act of Parliament which should countenance the opening on Sunday of public picture-galleries, of museums, and of libraries. The bulk of the populace learns at least as many and as valuable lessons in the playhouse as it does in the British Museum or in the National Gallery; and theatres which exert an immoral influence, if such there be, should be closed by the law, not only upon Sundays, but upon every other day of the week. Let it be granted that theatre-going is not only a harmless but an actively beneficial amusement, as we contend that it is, and we cannot, from this

point of view, argue that it would be injurious to allow this form of recreation on the seventh day of the week as well as on the other six. The example of neighbouring cities on the Continent does not go to prove that moral injury results to the people from the fact that they have fifty-two more opportunities in the year of going to the play than have we. Check all kinds of public amusement on Sunday by legislative enactment and the theatres must, of course, be closed: permit any kind of public amusement which comes within the scope of the law, and they must logically be tolerated with the rest, and encouraged as they are. The argument, so far as it goes, is, it seems to us, unanswerable; but it does not go far enough to prove that Sunday theatres would be a wise innovation. It is a great deal too late in the day to attempt to manufacture an Utopian code of law which is absolutely consistent with itself from beginning to end. We have to deal with prejudices as we find them, and to decide which may safely be neglected and which demand respect; we have to take into account the "circumstances" which proverbially "alter cases." Hence, earnestly though we believe in the lofty mission of the stage, its value in the present, and its possibilities in the future, we are far from thinking that to open the theatre on Sunday would in England be anything but a deplorable mistake. We doubt whether the play-going public would practically gain: we know that the players would inevitably lose by any such innovation.

So far as the actors are concerned it would, we think, not be saying too much to affirm that they would be against it to a man. The value of the frequently-recurring day's rest to the brain-worker has been demonstrated by medical men again and again. The actor and actress need the periodical freedom more than almost any other toilers, for the nature of their work, which commences when other people's play is just beginning, precludes their sharing the ordinary relaxations enjoyed in daily life by fellow-labourers whose evenings are not spent on the stage. The English actor in the full swing of his profession would feel completely crushed by his toil if he were to lose his Sundays. He would feel himself or fancy himself degenerating into a mere machine. No increase of remuneration would compensate him for the destruction of the day by which he marks the flight of week after week, the one evening which he can devote to the study of his favourite books, to the prattle of his little ones, the society of congenial friends, the recreations which, apart from a man's professional career, make life worth the living. Even against the Sunday rehearsal occasionally demanded by stern necessity, or stern stage management, the actor loudly protests; and how would he meet the notion of Sunday

labour becoming for him the rule instead of the hated exception? Moreover, even though we bear in mind the fact that the art of the French actor has not visibly suffered from the absence of a weekly rest, we cannot doubt that harm would inevitably be effected by the destruction of the English actor's day of leisure. He has been brought up to it: his companions in other intellectual work enjoy it if they choose to do, and he could not give it up, even were he so inclined, without suffering both mentally and physically.

More important even than this is it to recollect that any association of the stage with what would to thousands of persons honestly appear a desecration of the Sabbath, must work irreparable injury to the regard in which the theatre is held by many whose good opinion is of the very highest value. If we leave out of sight all argument as to the actual right and wrong of the question, we yet cannot shut our eyes to the inestimable advantage of attracting rather than repelling the very class of playgoers which would be most likely to be frightened away by any suggestion of Sabbath-breaking on the part of theatrical management. It is only of late that the acted drama has overcome the prejudices which, with vast masses of highly intelligent people, operated to make the theatre shunned as a moral pest-house. It is only of late that many intellectual lovers of the drama have recognized that they could gratify their tastes more efficiently, and not less innocently, in the theatre than in the study. It is only of late that from the pulpit the hand of fellowship has been manfully held out to the stage. What policy could be more fatal than one which, even though based upon the most logical of deductions, should scare away the welcome converts, should make enemies out of recently acquired friends, and should run the risk of losing for the theatre that position in our social economy to which it has just successfully asserted its lawful right?

CHILDREN ON THE STAGE.

IT seems a hard thing to say, but cleverly-trained children are fast becoming as great a nuisance on the stage as they are at home when they and their talents are obtrusively thrust under our notice. We all know how terrible are the half-hours spent at the houses of friends whose little ones are always made a centre of attention, where we are asked to note how the two-year-old can walk, how his elder brother can talk, how his sister can play the *Blue Bells of Scotland*, and how every other member of the family

group has some accomplishment which, when the age of the performer is taken into consideration, is really marvellous. Without being amongst the cynical old bachelors who like to hear a child cry because they are then sure that it will be sent to bed, we may yet have an old-fashioned impression that the proper place for children, until they can be sent to school, is the nursery, and that the less they are noticed in the drawing-room at afternoon tea, or in the dining-room at dessert, the better it is for them and for other people. The child loses the best and most beautiful attributes of childhood so soon as it becomes a subject of comment. Even before it reaches the fatal stage at which it begins to "show off" it will begin to be spoiled by self-consciousness, and injudicious friends will destroy the prettiest ways by admiring them. Children treated in this foolish fashion by fond parents grow before their time into men and women, so far as concerns certain faults which belong essentially to the adult, and they soon succeed in disgusting the very people who have unwisely encouraged them in their faults.

The text is an old one to preach from, but yet some of the deductions which are to be made from the platitude are often unaccountably missed. Our playwrights, for example, and especially those whose field is that of domestic drama, are taking a strong fancy to the custom of introducing child-characters into their pieces, and the emotion of a portion of the audience when by this means a touch of cheap pathos is effected appears to be held sufficient excuse for a very doubtful form of art. We know, of course, that baby-actors have to be engaged when certain of Shakspere's plays are to be placed upon the stage. We must have a pitiful Arthur for *King John*, and a "parlous boy"—who is generally a girl—for the "little prating York" in *Richard III.*, but the characters are obviously presented for the sake of their historical association with the plot. The motive is a very different one in half-a-score of plays which have been recently produced, and in which an attempt has, with more or less success, been made to get capital out of a nursery element not required by the exigencies of the story placed before us. The child who manages to reconcile father and mother when matrimonial differences take a decisive turn is naturally of French origin, and the situation certainly tells most effectively when the small peace-maker is unconscious of the mission which it is accomplishing. The children who have long death scenes upon the stage, amidst sorrowing relatives who have more or less to reproach themselves with in respect of their past history, sprang from such dramatised novels as *East Lynne* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Children's artless prattle, which generally sounds so highly artificial from behind the footlights, is again often

imported to add poignancy to the remorse of the wicked father or the thoughtless mother, and children are sometimes employed, as in *Marcel*—best known here in Mr. Clement Scott's delightful version, *Tears, Idle Tears,* played by Montague, at the Globe—to aid in working out curious medical and psychological problems. In pronounced melodrama, they are constantly seen and heard, and their ill-treatment by the villain of the occasion is, to the credit of rough human nature be it said, of the greatest dramatic value in its appeal to pit and gallery. More than this, we now have whole entertainments given on the stage at Christmas-time by children, child heroes and child heroines, child lovers and child heavy-fathers, child clowns and child columbines—for these baby performances are as yet restricted to pantomime. Stay, however, the latest development of this singular fancy must not be forgotten: we have now borrowed from America a dramatic production which aims higher than pantomime, and has for its main subject a couple of child characters delineated by a pair of child-actresses.

For many reasons the spread of this singular taste on the part of managers, or perhaps we should rather say on the part of the public, is, it seems to us, to be deprecated. In the first place, it can do the children themselves but little good. Acting is not an art which it seems desirable to develop in the infantile mind, and the stage door leads to a school where they are fitted to learn only the harmful lessons, and are unlikely to grasp the beneficial ones. Physically, moreover, they cannot but suffer from the late hours which during their engagements—fancy the "engagement" of an urchin of eight!—they must necessarily keep, whilst if they comply in the day-time with School Board requirements their little store of energy must be sadly overstrained. This argument, it is true, applies with comparatively little force to the host of juveniles employed as fairies, imps, and elves at Christmas pantomimes, especially if morning performances be, as is sometimes the case, the order of the day. It is even possible that, as has been urged more than once, children taken from poor and sordid homes may benefit greatly from such instruction as they get when they are drilled to do as they are told, are made to have clean hands and faces at least once in the twenty-four hours, and are, on account of their bread-winning powers, treated by their parents with a consideration which they would not otherwise command. But this reply does not touch the case of the little performers who obviously spring from a higher class of society, who have clearly been specially trained for their work, and are merely receiving a species of premature apprenticeship. These must lose a great deal more than they can gain from their most successful efforts upon the stage.

It is indeed rarely that in after life they do any good in the profession on which, by no choice of their own, they have so prematurely embarked. They grow old before they are young, and it is painful to see the struggles which are made by them, or for them, to retain that appearance of extreme youth which alone provides them with a market for their mechanical achievements. Almost of necessity they are of the stage stagey. Poor creatures! what chance have they had of seeing and studying what nature is? Brilliant exceptions there are, we know, to the rule, and talented stage children have before now developed into delightful artists; but we may none the less be permitted to doubt whether their after career would not have been at least as successful had none of their early years been spent upon the stage.

Passing from the players to the playgoers, we may fairly hesitate before admitting that with the more intelligent and better educated the child actor is really popular. To some we know the precocious phenomenon so highly valued by Mr. Crummles is absolutely distasteful. The unnatural pitch of the voice, the painful elocution, and the dog-like fidelity with which every step of the performance is gone through, give him acute pain—pain which arises not because he dislikes children, but because he loves them. And the tender-hearted matrons who watch with wonder the histrionic achievements of mites no bigger than those whom they have left at home in bed—is not the feeling of pity for the performer largely intermingled with the loudly-expressed admiration of the performance? Is not the applause which follows the touching scene in which a short-frocked morsel has taken part near akin to that bestowed upon the perfectly-trained beast of the field when he successfully executes some *tour de force?* The effort has little intrinsic value, but it obtains consideration on the score of its unusual conditions. Interest thus aroused cannot be healthy, and it will, we think, be a subject for regret if its existence should induce the increased invention and introduction of characters which demand interpretation by clever children on the stage.

THE THEATRE No. 3 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

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Marie Litton

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Portraits.

V.—MISS LITTON.

BROMPTON is peculiarly rich in theatrical associations. Thirty or forty years ago nearly every representative actor and actress might have been found within the radius of half a mile from Brompton Square. The list of these pleasant associations continues to increase, and it is probable that in this suburb, if suburb it can now be called, you will meet with more histrionic talent than in any other quarter. Not long ago a young lady came out of a house in Alfred Place West and proceeded to the Charing Cross Station, taking with her a huge parcel of toys for the children of a school-friend living in the country. The perfect taste with which she was dressed, joined to the vivacious expression of her bright blue eyes, naturally drew attention upon her, and one or two gentlemen of the Flutter type were heard to whisper, "Miss Litton." They were not mistaken, and those who saw the actress bending under the weight of the parcel of toys hereinbefore alluded to, and knew or guessed at the object of the journey she was about to take, may well have thought that after all it was as herself that Miss Litton appeared to the greatest advantage. This implies no disparagement of her histrionic aptitude. On the contrary, the high place she occupies in her profession has been fairly won, and it may even be doubted whether her powers have yet reached maturity or found sufficient scope for their display. She is a native of Derbyshire, and belongs to a good family. Her first appearance on the stage was made ten years ago at the Princess's Theatre. Mr. and Mrs. Boucicault were then playing in *Jeannie Deans,* and Miss Litton was entrusted with the subordinate but not very easily played part of Effie. Her task was satisfactorily performed—so satisfactorily, indeed, that she received a far more exacting part in the comedy of *Presumptive Evidence,* played soon afterwards. We next find her supporting Mr. Alfred Wigan and Miss Robertson in *Our Cards* at the Gaiety Theatre, and towards the end of 1869 she appeared in *Uncle Dick's Darling.* That she was an actress of rare promise could not be doubted, and many ladies of inferior gifts would have clung tenaciously to such a footing as she had obtained in London. But like the late Charlotte Cushman, Miss Litton came to see that no one could navigate a ship unless he had learned his trade before the mast, and soon after the with-

drawal of *Uncle Dick's Darling* she joined the company at the Brighton Theatre in order to have the benefit of appearing in a variety of parts at short intervals. There she remained for three years, returning to London at the beginning of 1873 to take the helm at the then newly-erected Court Theatre. Her management was characterized by considerable liberality and good taste. Comedies by Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Albery, Mr. Frank Marshall, and Dr. Marston were produced, and the company included Mr. Hermann Vezin, Miss Bufton, Mr. Frank Matthews, Miss Bishop, Mr. W. J. Hill, and Mr. Belford. For some time her name did not appear in the casts of any of the pieces she brought out, but on the revival of Mr. Gilbert's comedy, *An Old Score*—on this occasion called *Quits* —she was induced to play Mary Waters, a part in which her grace of style and genuineness of feeling were beyond the reach of controversy. This broke the spell; and soon afterwards she is found taking part in Mr. Bertie Vyse's comedy, *About Town*, and Mr. Latour Tomline's *Wedding March*. It was during Miss Litton's tenancy of the Court Theatre that the *Happy Land*, in which Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Ayrton were so wickedly turned into ridicule, and which brought down the resentment of the Lord Chamberlain on the manageress's head, was brought out. Her term at the Court Theatre expired, Miss Litton took the St. James's Theatre, opening her campaign there with another quaint piece by Mr. Gilbert, *Tom Cobb*, and subsequently adding the late Mr. Brough's *Conrad and Medora* to the bill. By her acting in this latter piece she proved that the utmost vivacity in burlesque acting is not incompatible with refinement and delicacy. Last autumn she had a substantial proof of her strength and popularity in the form of an offer of an engagement at the Prince of Wales's Theatre. This engagement she accepted, and at the commencement of the season undertook the difficult and ungrateful part of Mrs. Montressor in *An Unequal Match*. The part is "ungrateful" because it is completely alienated from our sympathies, and it was almost amusing to see what a struggle there was in the minds of the audience between contempt for Mrs. Montressor and admiration for her representative. Since she left Tottenham-street, Miss Litton has been at the head of the company at the Aquarium Theatre. Here she impersonated Lady Teazle and Lydia Languish with singular effect, but it was not until she appeared as Olivia in the *Vicar of Wakefield* that we had a chance of estimating what she may come to do on the stage. Up to that time she had principally been known as a vivacious actress in comedy and burlesque; her Olivia revealed an unsuspected capacity for expressing depth of feeling.

The Round Table.

THE STORY OF A WALTZ.

By Jacques Offenbach.

MY mother and sisters used to lull me to sleep by singing to me a sweet, slow waltz. I had never heard all of it. The first eight bars were the only parts of it I knew. Maybe those loved ones themselves were ignorant of all the rest. These eight bars haunted me—fixed themselves on my brain with all the greater authority because my charmed heart opened wide all the doors to them. Did not each note bring to me a thousand tender recollections? When they flitted through my mind I saw our old home, my father's house; I heard the voices of all those whom I regretted, and who had loved me warmly. I was in Paris all alone, earning my daily bread by playing the violoncello in the Opéra Comique. I was then at an age when most children are still at school, with many years of school days yet before them. I was quietly jogging on towards the future, but I regretted the past. Solitude was sometimes very oppressive to me. This waltz, though nothing very wonderful, had at last come to assume strange proportions in my mind. It had ceased to be a mere waltz. It had become almost a prayer which I hummed from morning to night, not as a supplication to heaven, but because it seemed to me that when I repeated it my family heard me, and when it echoed in my memory, I could have sworn 'twas my loved ones at home who responded to me. I cannot express how eagerly I desired to hear the whole of that waltz. I could not deceive myself. My continuations seemed charming to me when I extemporised them, but when I repeated them they spoke to me only of myself and nothing of my loved ones at home, nor of the departed days of childhood. Years had come and gone, but those eight bars did not fade away from memory; on the contrary, they seemed deeper graven on it with each departed year.

One day, feeling I could stand it no longer, I set out for home to hunt for my waltz. As there was no cause for my journey, my father and the rest of the family covered me with caresses. They attributed my return to an increase of affection for them. They were mistaken, for I loved them so dearly that I could not, for the life of me, have loved them more than I did. I dared not breathe to them one word about my waltz, lest I should destroy their illusions. It seemed to

me I should wound them were I to talk about my waltz. Those who know what it is to love will understand what I mean. One evening my father, who was fond of hearing me play, asked for some music. He was a learned and severe judge. I always felt a little nervous at being asked to play before him. That evening, however, I did not wait to be pressed, and without any prelude to make my fingers agile, I played the famous bars of the waltz which persecuted me. My father said:

"Is it possible! Do you still remember Zimmer's waltz?"

I exclaimed: "Zimmer! Is that a waltz by Zimmer? Are you sure of that? Who was Zimmer?"

My father replied: "Zimmer was a young composer, who, in times past, had some vogue. He began unusually well, and was becoming popular, when one day he disappeared and nobody knows what became of him."

"Do you know his waltz from beginning to end?"

"No, I do not."

"How could you, with your prodigious memory, have forgotten it?"

"For the excellent reason that I never knew it. Your poor, dear mother sang it to put you to sleep, and I dare say she never knew more of it than those eight bars."

The next day I visited every music-shop in Cologne. I asked the dealers for Zimmer's waltz. I did not know its title, so I said: "It begins in this way," and I sang the first eight bars. They looked at me smilingly, and everywhere I got for an answer: "I don't know it." I returned quite vexed to Paris. I never entered a music-shop for years, and during all my travels, without asking for Zimmer's waltz. I received everywhere the same answer: "I don't know it." At last I gave up all hope of finding the rest of it, and contented myself in good and in bad ways with the eight bars which invariably came into my memory.

One morning, while I was settling an account with Brandus, the Paris music publisher, he said to me:

"I have just heard of a poor fellow who really has some talent."

"Are you going to publish his music?"

"I should like to do so, but he is old and has no reputation."

"He will acquire reputation."

"He pretends he had reputation once."

"What is his name?"

"Zimmer."

"Zimmer! Did you say Zimmer? Where does he live? Give me his address. Quick! Quick!"

"I don't know his address. He is to come here to-morrow to take back his manuscript."

"Brandus, my dear friend, do me a favour, a very great favour; publish that manuscript, pay him ten times what it is worth, and charge the money to me, and send the excellent fellow to me. I would give anything to see him."

Brandus promised to grant both my requests. I waited impatiently all next day to see Zimmer. He did not come. I waited the second day—months—years. Zimmer never appeared. I was at first vexed enough, and then I became resigned to my disappointment. I said to myself that after all a wise man ought to content himself with little; that these eight bars had occupied a sufficient share of my life, and that I ought not to give further thought to the rest; that, after all, the rest of it must be poor since it had passed into oblivion, and, thank Heaven, the day had gone by when there were unknown masterpieces.

In 1871 I went to Vienna to attend the rehearsal of *Les Brigands*. Vienna is fond of me, and delights to spoil me. I am very proud of this. I never lose an opportunity to confess it. Whenever I visit the Austrian capital my friends, who are numerous, give me a most hospitable reception, and, will ye, nill ye, I must enjoy all the pleasures of that city, which is the city of pleasures. One night, while we were returning from Die Neue Welt (which is one of the most curious establishments in the world), our carriages were brought to a standstill by a crowd which had assembled in front of a fifth-rate ballroom, frequented by soldiers and suburban workmen. We thought at first the crowd had been attracted by a battle between drunkards, or a conflict between lovers, for a man was lying on the ground. Dr. Falkner, who was one of the party, leaped from the carriage, and went to see what was the matter. He was told:—

"The check-taker of the ball has suddenly died." Dr. Falkner examined the man on the ground, and presently said:—

"He is not dead, but is dying of starvation."

Everybody tried to do something for the poor check-taker. He was given a glass of wine. A collection was taken up for him. We put something into it. The doctor promised to go to see the poor fellow in the morning, and asked his address. A woman gave him a visiting-card, and the doctor went up to the carriage-lamp and read:—

Rodolphe Zimmer,
Professor of Music.

Sternegasse, No. 268.

"Zimmer! I know him! Quick! quick!" I exclaimed. "Put him in this carriage. I will take charge of him!"

We drove to the address on the card. Zimmer's chamber was on the fifth story. The door was opened, and our hearts ached when we

saw—not the chamber, but—the hole in which the poor fellow lived. Four naked, solid walls; a little straw in one corner, an earthenware jug, an earthenware porringer, a bit of soap—nothing else. Luckily we were in a furnished lodging-house, and the chambers on the first story were almost decent. We had poor Zimmer placed in the best of them. Dr. Falkner promised me that he should be well taken care of.

A week or ten days afterwards a servant announced to me: "Mr. Rodolphe Zimmer." At last I had got possession of *my* waltz! A tall, old man, with a noble face, entered my room. Misfortune had cruelly scratched his wrinkled cheeks with her claws. His eyes were gentle and resigned. Long white locks fell on his black coat, which was most threadbare, but as tidy as could be. Everything about him awoke sympathy.

"Sir, I have come to thank you for your kindness to me."

"It is not worth mentioning. I did nothing but follow the example of your friends."

"I have no friends. I have not long enough to live to talk to you of gratitude. I have come merely to say: 'Thank you.'"

I replied quite drily (for to tell the truth, I thought his "Thank you" rather a poor return for all I had done): "I repeat again, you owe me nothing. Do you know who I am?"

"Jacques Offenbach."

"Yes, that 's my name; now you can understand that between brethren of the same profession the very least thing they can do is to help each other."

Zimmer murmured in a bitter tone: "Brethren! You say that out of politeness. Alas! I am nothing but a poor professor without profit, that is with nothing."

"I beg your pardon. You have had your share of popularity. You have had talents."

"I am obliged by your politeness."

"It is not politeness. It is my sincere opinion."

"You may, perhaps, have heard that, and you repeat it to me to lessen the bitterness of alms. You do not, you cannot know anything about me."

"You are mistaken, and I am going to prove it to you."

I went to the piano and I played slowly the eight bars I knew so well. The old man lifted his head at the first notes; stupefaction was followed by infinite delight. The artist straightened himself up. A beam of joy shone through the tears which streamed down his hollow cheeks. I had the utmost difficulty to get through the eight bars, his emotion had so affected me. I rose. He ran towards me and took my hands, and exclaimed:—

"Ah! Maestro, dear Maestro! May God reward you! You have done a good deed for me. You have prevented me from dying —that was nothing. You give me strength to live—that is everything. So there is indeed somebody on earth who still knows me, and that somebody is you. Ah! how can I show my gratitude for this delight, which is so great, so unexpected!"

I exclaimed: "Nothing, my dear friend. You have but to play me the rest of the waltz."

"The rest?—the rest of my waltz?"

"Yes. It is the greatest favour you could do me. When I shall have told why, you will see that all is not settled between us, and that I am still your debtor."

Zimmer sat at the piano and played as I had just done, the eight bars. Then he stopped. I was all attention. He seemed to be trying to recall it. His physiognomy changed from astonishment to pain. Suddenly he clasped his brow in his hands and exclaimed in terror:—

"I can't recollect it! I can't recollect it! Good heavens! I am going crazy—maybe it is excitement—*you* are listening to me—and yet this very morning I played it. That waltz is my life, myself—a very mournful life. Let me go home, I'll fetch the waltz to you. I will not be long gone."

"Be still more generous. Come to breakfast with me to-morrow, and then you will play the waltz to me and tell me your history."

That very evening a telegram summoned me to Paris. A month afterwards I returned to Vienna. I then found that Zimmer had died in the interim, leaving a parcel for me.

I confess it was with emotion I opened the packet. It contained the waltz, a small ring, set with sapphires, an envelope grown yellow by time, and these lines traced by a trembling hand:—

MAESTRO,—I owe to you the sole pleasure which I have enjoyed for these forty years. Allow me while dying to bequeath you the three objects which have recalled to me my past happiness. I promised you my history, I tell it. I was five-and-twenty years old. I had been betrothed for three years. I adored my love with all my heart and soul. I worked day and night to become celebrated that she might be proud of me and happy. I believe there are still living people who knew her. Were they asked, they assuredly would say there never appeared on earth a woman more perfect than she was. One evening her mother said to me: "She is twenty years old; you may marry her." I kissed both the hands of my darling's mother. My love looked at me in silence, there was such happiness visible in her whole person; I was too touched to be able to speak. I left them for Prague to fetch my father to our wedding. When I returned with him, a fortnight afterwards, and buoyant with happiness, I went to introduce her to him, a neighbour met me at her

door, and said: "Don't knock too loudly, she is dead!" 'Twas true. She was dead. I entered her house. Her old mother was there weeping all alone. She was dead. There are young girls who die of consumption; death's advances are followed day by day, and in six months a life's love is given them; but she died without an hour's illness, all suddenly, no warning, no time for last words, no time for farewell. My father sobbed. He led me away, saying: "Don't despair!" He had never seen her. I have since that day vegetated hopeless, disheartened, grieving, obscure. The enclosed paper contains her hair; seeing death approach, I have wanted to burn it, but then I said: "If you do not die you will never console yourself for their loss." I beseech you burn it without opening the paper. This ring I gave her on the day of our betrothal. It cost me a hundred florins. I have been starving this many a day as I gazed on it, still it quits me only with life. I bequeath it to you that it may remain unsold. Once more I thank you. May God keep unto you all of them you love!

I burned the paper which contained her hair; I did not open it. The ring shall not be sold. I have published the Waltz.

PAST AND PRESENT.

By Lady Hardy.

NOT only in our own age, but in all times, it has been the custom of a certain class of individuals to glorify the past at the expense of the present. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." Things that are now present to our sight and hearing lose colour and brightness when contrasted with what has been, because in our mind's eye we see things, not as they were, but as our imagination has re-created and painted them. We give to the dead days of our youth, and to all the actors therein, an importance and brilliancy which they in reality never possessed; then our experience was limited, our judgment immature; if we could see things now as they were then we might be better disposed to give the palm to the present. In matters concerning the drama, especially, this carping and quibbling process goes on. The old grey-headed playgoer groans over what he is pleased to call the decadence of the drama and the inferiority of the actors therein: things were "altogether different, then acting was something like acting," and they fling a Sarah Siddons, a Mrs. Cibber, Edmund Kean, Garrick, &c. in our teeth. There is no doubt that fifty years or a century back the great stars of tragedy shone their brightest, and quite obscured the twinkling talent by which they were surrounded. Judging from what we hear from the mildest advocates of the old stage days, one grand central figure possessed the stage, and was

supported by a very indifferent staff of wooden-headed subordinates, who acted as mere foils to throw out the grandeur of the centre figure, instead of harmonizing with it and rendering the scene realistic and complete. We demand a different order of things now, when the smallest part must be adequately filled, and attention to surrounding details be strictly enforced. The star system existing then is abolished now, except perhaps in the provinces, and even there it is fast dying out. We would by no means wish to depreciate the great tragic genius of ancient years, which we are told raised the audience to a pitch of enthusiasm unheard of now-a-days. But an audience now is not easily roused to enthusiasm: people are exigent, and are rarely roused to enthusiasm about anything. It may be that no histrionic genius has ever equalled, or even approached, the perfection of the "divine Siddons." Even in her pictured face we recognise the dignity and power of her genius. But the question suggests itself to our mind, Could she have given the delicious touches of pathos, the tender passion, and pleasant home scenes which we have upon the stage? Things seem to have been thoroughly artificial then; now they are more natural, and illustrate domestic trials and perplexities instead of the stagey miseries and misfortunes of kings, queens, or kingdoms. When we go to a theatre in these days the things we hear and see come home to us all. We see *ourselves* and our own passions reflected, and know that the actors' mimic sorrows might be our own. No giant's despair and tear-to-tatter agonies march over the modern stage with a flourish of drums and trumpets. Times are changed, and tastes change too. The old stately plays and players lived their day, and have tottered off the stage as the lean and slippered pantaloon totters out of life. The light graceful comedies and tender dramas we have now seem like an acted bit of our own lives. The one bright particular star is no longer a rarity. Instead of one we have a hundred lights twinkling in the dramatic hemisphere. In no former age has there been such a versatility of talent, in many cases amounting to genius, as possesses the theatrical world to-day. We are only grieved to see it sometimes degraded by being compelled to illustrate characters and scenes which are not only indifferent and far beneath the dignity of the actor, but absolutely repulsive to the audience. Good actors are far more abundant than good plays. It is pitiable to look round and see the clumsy adaptations from the French which find their way to the English stage, but can never find a permanent home there, as they are totally lacking in the interest and refinement which the cultivated playgoer demands, and generally prove to be managerial failures. However they may bristle with situations and sparkle with

French witticisms, we neither appreciate the one nor comprehend the other. The English dress has thrown it all out of gear, as in order to make it tolerated here the pruning-knife must be so freely used and the whole production boiled down and boiled up till all the pungent flavour is extracted from it, the spirit evaporated, and a collection of dry bones and stilted phrases are all that is left for our entertainment. Why will some misguided managers go gathering and gleaning the dramatic fields abroad, when they might be well supplied at home with things of native growth? For there is no lack of dramatic force and fire in the generation of to-day. Of course this must combine with the power to invent and construct a plot likely to attract and interest. If a proper amount of encouragement were held out native talent would soon rise up and march to the fore, but the difficulty is to obtain a hearing, even a distant chance of being heard upon the stage. Much genial, racy talent is allowed to run to waste in vulgar burlesque or farcical follies, which indicates to how low a state public taste is falling; for when there is an insufficient supply of wholesome mental food, the common mind will satisfy its craving with whatever garbage falls in its way, and people laugh under the gaslight at scenes and coarse vulgarities which would shock or disgust them at home. However, we may look forward to the time when the demon Burlesque will be exorcised, and its place be more widely occupied by the poetical romantic play or high-toned domestic drama. When such appears, the public will flock to support them, as it is flocking now to be refreshed by the most exquisite pastoral that has appeared in modern days.

LORD DUNDREARY.

By the late John Oxenford.

LET us ask ourselves, without the remotest chances of finding an answer, what would have been the condition of the English-speaking world for the last fourteen years if there had been no such personage as Lord Dundreary. Within that period Europe has been turned topsy-turvey, old landmarks have been removed, crowns have been lost and won. But Dundreary remains unmoved, immovable. We may liken him to the old Egyptian Sphinx, which survives the revolution of ages, and is, moreover, a gigantic puzzle.

Everybody goes to see Lord Dundreary. Education in London would be incomplete without some familiarity with the inimitable peer. Like the *argot* once confined to a class, some of his phrases have become part of the general idiom. A Dundrearyism can be

recognized as soon as uttered, like an Irish bull. But ask people the simple question, under what category they would place Dundreary, whether he is to be regarded as a fool or an out-of-the-way manifestation of shrewdness, and opinions are divided. According to the Mahomedan belief, idiots and madmen are inspired. Is there not something Mahomedan in the manner in which Dundreary is regarded? We know that he is not quite cannie; but we hold that there is something oracular about his utterances. He will look at problems as we have not regarded them. If he hears that "birds of a feather flock together," he will not pounce upon the truth, or the supposed truth, indicated by the proverb. His attention is attracted by the indefinite article, which is necessarily singular. "What an absurd creature," he exclaims, "must be a bird with *a* feather!" The old saw is contemplated from a new point of view, and matter is given for reflection.

The beginnings of Lord Dundreary were very small. He was originally intended to be a merely subordinate personage in a drama, in which Asa Trenchard was the leading figure, and the lines he had to utter when first he dawned upon the United States were only forty-seven in number. Of these lines, Mr. Sothern does not utter one now, but in lieu thereof he speaks some seven hundred or eight hundred of his own, all consistent with the character. As an instance of Mr. Sothern's ability in rising to an occasion, we may briefly record the history of the letter written to Lord Dundreary by that great invisible, his brother Sam, who in *Our American Cousin* in its pristine shape did not even enjoy that shadowy existence which belongs to him at present. Mr. Sothern had promised to play for the benefit of Mr. John Raymond, at Mobile. On his arrival there from New Orleans, the first object that greeted his astonished eyes was an announcement to the effect that, in the course of his performance of Lord Dundreary, Mr. Sothern would read "a Letter from Brother Sam." The representative of the unique lord was not only amazed, but grievously annoyed. However, there were no means of escaping from the difficulty, so he scribbled the scene on the back of a play-bill. The effect produced when the letter was read in the evening was tremendous, and Mobile anticipated the unanimous verdict of London.

In most cases, where a great part has been created the actor has devoted a certain time to the study of its peculiarities. Dundreary, as we see him now, is evidently the result of a life-long meditation. His oddities were derived from no text, written or printed. They were devised by the actor, who, as we have stated, was here the author likewise, and the course of polishing to which the pristine figure has been subjected has continued without interruption.

Do not let it be supposed that the eccentric being who, standing on the Haymarket boards, excites so much mirth and wonderment is a mere creation of imagination. There is evidently nothing in Dundreary that has not been suggested to the actor by something witnessed in actual life, and it is to the element of reality which peeps through all his eccentricities that the universal sympathy which he inspires is to be ascribed. Before he had attained his vast success, an utter failure might have been predicted. There was no precedent to guide the judgment one way rather than another. In November, 1861, how desperate was the hazard on which a treasure of thought and reflection had been staked! The venture proved triumphantly fortunate. Dundreary was at once declared to be a person that must be seen. The verdict of subsequent years has declared that he is not only permanent, but even perpetually new. Of the law of wear and tear he is altogether independent. People who have seen him a score of times go to see him again, not merely for the sake of meeting an old friend, but actuated by curiosity in the strictest sense of the word. Something will appear which has never appeared before. The course of observation to which Dundreary owes its origin still continues. The character is ever receiving fresh aliment, and the aspect of the picture presented to the public is unceasingly changed. After all, what is this queer lord who, always varying, is still ever the same? In what consists his identity? Let us hazard an answer to the interrogatory by saying that he is a nature without ballast. His sense of the ludicrous is most keen, his perceptive faculties are even over-developed. He grasps blindly at most original notions, and these slip away from him for want of tenacity of brain and continuity of thought. Power of concentration he has none. He thinks of too many things at a time, and cannot even finish an anecdote, some image totally foreign to the subject arising in his mind and chasing from his consciousness all that has gone before. The merest trifle puts him out. He has, as it were, no back to his head, and consequently no back-bone to his character. Those who regard Dundreary as a mere stuttering fop, as one of the numerous family that has held the stage, with more or less tenacity, for upwards of two centuries, are utterly mistaken. He is, as we have said, a man without ballast—an incomplete man. He might have been as logical as the best of us; shone forth as a mathematician, a politician, an orator, what you will, had he not been subjected to a perpetual counteraction. He has impediments of all kinds—in speech, in gait, in eyesight, and, worst of all, in judgment.

Moral respect he always commands, and none of the many laughs that are raised at his expense involve contempt. Whatever

his deficiencies, he is a gentleman, and a thoroughly kind-hearted gentleman, too, utterly incapable of intentional rudeness or ill-nature. In man's honesty he has apparently a hazy sort of confidence, but this does not prevent him from thinking himself exceedingly "'cute," while he is cheated by all with whom he comes into contact. His helplessness is almost affecting. Always waited on by others, dressed by his tailor and valet, horsed by his stud-groom, provided with locomotion by his coachman, he is incapable of taking the initiative in the most trivial action of life. The situation of his pockets in a new pair of trousers is to him an inexplicable mystery; his watch is always out of order, and, by a bold hypothesis, we may conjecture that he dyes his hair, because he has a natural bias towards the wrong rather than the right. He is a man that sees everything askew, and, by a marvellous coincidence, the artist who represents him is named Edward Askew Sothern. To the report which I have heard that Mr. Sothern was born on the 1st of April I attach no importance. There is nothing in common between the docile follies of the ordinary April fool and the mysterious aberrations of Lord Dundreary.

THOUGHTS ON SCENERY.

By Percy Fitzgerald.

FEW think how conventional a thing Scenery is, and how far it departs from what it professes to represent. A person who had never been inside a theatre would not recognize the groves, landscapes, and interiors as resembling anything he had seen in real life, though he would have before him paintings of various objects on canvass suspended behind the performers. How absurd, for instance, is the arrangement of those profile banks, with the tree in the foreground,—as it were cut out in cardboard, and whose trunk does not affect to be round or solid! These layers, placed one behind the other, are regarded by the painter as the foundation of his illusive craft, and should more than satisfy the spectator. Long ago, in primitive days, it might have done so; but the strong elements of scenic effect now in use are actually destructive of each other. A dazzling, blinding light only reveals the barren nakedness of such profile outlines, while vivid streaks of colouring are inconsistent with the smooth surfaces. This excess destroys all illusion, because it reveals even the texture of boards, canvass, and paint itself,—destroying perspective, and reducing the whole to what it was originally—a *stage, i.e.*, a raised coign of vantage on which performers may exhibit. Of course it may be said that

mere spectacular display is all that is now desired, and a brilliant gaudy show; but if *illusion* be sought, it can only be repeated that too much light, too much colour, and the principles of "set scenes," are destructive of it. Through this excess the art of scene-painting appears to be lost in England, not through any fault of the artists, who have to arrange and use such colours as will bear the furnace glare that will be thrown on them. Shadows are useless under such conditions, and the effect of retreating portions need not be given, by paint at least, as the carpenter will contrive all that. The result is a garishness and poverty, and at this moment, as the curtain rises on a new piece, though there is applause at the art of the scene-painter, or the newspapers tell us how Messrs. Gordon or Hann or Craven were called for, there is nothing to give real pleasure to the cultivated eye.

The mistake in modern scenery is the attempt to combine the hostile elements of pictorial or artificial distance, shadows, &c., with *real* effects of distance. Each must necessarily destroy the effect of the other. A real chair will make a painted chair look flat and poor, while the painted chair will make the real one look dull and prosy. To imitate real objects by the agency of colours and painting requires a flat surface; therefore, constructed set pieces, retiring at right or acute angles to the footlights, are false in principle. A really well painted flat scene, the perspective skilfully drawn, the colours artfully moderated, will convey a far better idea of space and distance than if the whole stage had been thrown open to the back wall. The old rows of side-scenes which drew away, with "a cloth" at the back embodied, rudely, the true principle of scenery. All these practicable hills, bridges, houses, which are now regularly "built" upon the stage, do not really convey the idea of what they purpose to represent, being often but a few feet higher than the actor's head. Every one has seen the scenery used in *William Tell* at Covent Garden, painted, I think, by Beverly, which, though faded and dilapidated, conveys in a surprising manner the effect of awful height and misty distance, and the grandeur of the Swiss mountains. There is a further difficulty that is unsurmountable with built-up scenery, the "boards"—always smooth, level, and deck-like, and which, under the glare of light, destroy all illusion. Boards they are, and boards they will remain, though we see the absurd ascent up to the water-mill, which plainly and without coyness displays itself as a sloping, wooden platform, with a jagged piece of canvass stuck on in front. There can be little illusion in seeing a person walk up a machine of this kind, and there could hardly be less if it were labelled, "This is a sloping bank." It will be asked what is to be done, for we

cannot ascend hills that are merely painted on a "cloth" of canvass. The answer is found: that all such motions do not belong to the drama, and a really good piece gains nothing by having such things presented *coram publico*. On the whole, it must be admitted that the principles of scenery as regards deception are as rude and elementary as they were a hundred years ago; for though more pretentious and costly, the result is not so illusive.

It must be owned, however, that in Paris it is a real art, and at the French Opera the works of Ciceri and others have extraordinary merit and effect. A Cathedral scene in Faust by this artist is celebrated, and though to a certain extent very moderately "built up," the effects of shadow and distance are produced by the brush and the art of the painter. But until the light be tempered so as to keep the boards or ground and the joinings of the scenery more or less misty or indistinct, we must bid farewell to the sense of illusion. With system and under moderate light, the edges of the side-scenes, placed behind one another, seemed to blend together. Then as regards the amount of light; the old theory was that the stage should be lit much as a room was, with just so much exaggeration of the lighting as would make allowance for the spectators being at a distance. It will be obvious that a scale of light of this kind ought to be about the same as would greet the guest entering a drawing-room on the night of a party. The feet and lower portions of the figures might be in comparative darkness—which would be an indifferent matter—but the faces, expression, and heads far and near would be revealed with sufficient distinctness. With this view, so lately as a hundred years ago, the stage of Drury Lane was illuminated with four chandeliers—hanging exactly behind the green curtains—whose light was held sufficient to exhibit the faces and the expression, the scenery being lit in a moderate degree by other lights. Footlights—revealed to the boxes and galleries like fire seen through the bars of an immense furnace, are really the rudest and coarsest of devices; if one only considers it a moment, as the idea of a picture of human life and manners being presented with a line of fires perpetually at the very feet of the persons most concerned. There may be hopes that the electric light may work a change, and I would suggest to its patron, the versatile and practical manager, Mr. Hollingshead, whether he could not apply his mind to the solution of this problem, and find some way of directing this light on the stage, say from the panels of the private boxes on the grand tier level.

The aim of scenery should be rather negative than positive—viz. to protect the spectator from the disturbing influence of prose and real life—and supply a background of so abstract a kind that

it will harmonize with the sentiments of the piece. A century ago, this principle of stock scenery was in vogue, and a kind of general "street" or forest for open-air conversations; "a drawing-room," a library, for indoor business, was held sufficient. In truth, if we think, in real life, of any serious dramatic crisis in which we have figured, the background takes no higher or more distinct shape than that of "a street" or "a room" generally. The human interest dwarfs all details. Of course if a strong, fierce light be directed on these old flats, the deception is revealed, and it is discovered that the shadows are not really retreating surfaces. A fair test of scenic principles would be the now favourite interior of a salon or drawing-room where the light war of words between the marquise and her lover go on. This, here, as well as in foreign countries, is always presented as a regularly enclosed chamber, a canvass ceiling being laid on the top, with doors at each side. Now it will be seen that this supposes quite a false theory of the relation of the audience to the scene, and assumes that the fourth side of the room has been conveniently removed to allow them to look in and see what is going on. This is an almost geometrical way of looking at the matter. The true theory is that the audience has a kind of power of being present in a sort of supernatural way, and are, as it were, in company with the figures. The scenery is for them but an indication, as some background is necessary for a statue—or as we look from a window on a landscape. We are in the room, listening, and looking on, but in no particular locality. Moreover, the audience is seated at a distance, and the room on this practical box theory, could only have effect for a person standing at the footlights. An inclosure, too, of whatever kind, is fatal to illusion, and limits the view. On the other hand, we gain space, poetry, size, by painting, and the effects produced by painting.

On this text we might dwell much longer, but the reader will be able, from the few principles here laid down, to develop much more for himself.

A NIGHTMARE OF TRADITION.

By Alfred Cellier.

WHAT different ways of reading a newspaper there are! Perhaps it would be an exaggeration to say that no two persons handle a journal alike, either in the way of reading or digesting its contents. Some only look at it, others only read it; some read and mark, others mark and do not read. Women, as a rule, do neither of these; they only glance. But those who read,

mark, and learn are, I should say, in the minority, and those who add inward digestion are fewer still. Now I wonder whether the newspaper-reading public ever read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the criticisms and notices of the performance of Italian opera in London during the season. If they do, they cannot fail, except in one or two cases, to be struck with the absence of anything interesting. The same old phrases and expressions, the same mild condemnations, the same faint praise. There it is, about every two days—the record of the preceding evening's entertainment, interspersed with the same observations about the *stars*, the conductor, the orchestra, the energy of the impressario, &c., and generally concludes with some sentence in substance like the following: "It only remains to add that the opera was placed on the stage in a manner worthy the reputation of such a house as Covent Garden" (or Her Majesty's, as the case may be). Of course the expression, "placed on the stage," I take to mean the stage management, that is, the entrances and exits of the chorus, the position of the principal singers, and the *action* and *stage business* of the tragedy, comedy, or drama set to music and called an opera.

Someone has said, I forget who, that the English are always conservative in those things in which they ought to be liberal, and liberal in those things in which they ought to be conservative. In regard to Art, I venture to think that there is a great deal of truth in the assertion. That there is an improvement in Italian opera performances upon those given thirty years ago no one can deny; at the same time there is what people call "*tradition*," everlasting tradition. People are apt to accept tradition in various matters without inquiring the cause. If anything is inartistic and contrary to common sense, and a suggestion is made for its removal, we are met by an exclaimer: "Ah, but there is a tradition, you know." What if the tradition is all wrong to begin with? We might as well have kept to the old-fashioned leader of the orchestra, who conducted with a violin-bow, and the orchestra might still be assisted by a performer on the harpsichord; or we might as well insist on the conductor of modern promenade concerts wearing a pink shirt, blue coat with gilt buttons, and a nosegay in his button-hole. I have no doubt there are those who regret the disappearance of these glories of the past, and moan over what they call innovations with the remark, "It will never do, Sir," meaning that the public having been once befooled, "tradition" requires that they shall continue to be so. I argue exactly the contrary. Music has made rapid and large strides during the last twenty years. What with the Monday Popular Concerts, the Philharmonic Societies, the Crystal Palace, the Promenade Concerts, the numerous private concerts,

various amateur instrumental and vocal organisations throughout the country, music is brought among us more prominently than it ever has been before. What with cheap pianos, cheap music, cheap concerts, and concerts for nothing, you will hear more music—good, bad, and indifferent—in London in a month than you can probably hear in any town on the Continent in a whole season. Yet, with all this advance, very little has been done for lyric art.

The Italian opera is supported by the world of fashion, who subscribe to it as they do to the Horticultural, Ascot, "the Zoo," &c. They go to hear a particular singer (not the opera itself—they never come in until the first act is half over), and when the season is over, up go the shutters until my lord and my lady re-enter their box, or the lounger retakes his accustomed fauteuil. Italian opera will never take hold of the people, not even at cheap prices; it may for a week or two, supported by two classes, viz., those who go for the love of music itself, and those who go merely because it is Italian opera, and they are doing what the world of fashion does. Why is it always *Italian* opera in this country? Even works written originally in other languages are translated into Italian for the London stage. Is one to believe people like to go and hear what they cannot understand? I do not think they do, and I am convinced that if an audience only knew what was being said, a great many operas would never have been given more than once.

Now that I am abusing Italian opera, I may as well give in detail my objections against it:—1. The plots of the majority of the operas are unhealthy, not to say filthy, and had any Englishman written such libretti, the press would have unanimously condemned it off the boards; but, as it is in Italian and sung by a Patti, we are charged one guinea or more for a seat, and told it is "beautiful." 2. With a few (and very few) exceptions, the acting is worse than a third-rate theatre, but as no one knows what it is all about, and being, as I before said, Italian, we are told that this and that artiste "acted with intelligence." 3. The chorus always act in the same way (tradition, I suppose): that is, they come on, arm-in-arm, two-and-two, and always appear to agree with what everyone says; they enter people's bedrooms, boudoirs, and gardens, in the most extraordinary way, and when one of the principal characters has anything important to relate, they generally turn their backs on those who are supposed to be interested, and in sweet song discourse the information to the subscribers in front of the footlights. So much for their stage management! 4. In consequence of the enormous prices paid to the stars the all-round performances are unsatisfactory. Now the reason that English opera has never flourished in London is because all these tests are applied whenever it appears.

The moment a composer produces an opera his libretto is attacked; his singers are told they cannot act or sing; the chorus and orchestra are weak; the *mise-en-scène* is indifferent; and the public, being able to judge of the situations in their own language, find English opera and operas in English rather tedious, and of second quality. I do not complain—I admit it is so; but why not apply the same arguments to foreign operas? Tradition, I suppose. English opera has no tradition except that borrowed from the Italian stage. The works of Balfe and Wallace were built upon the weak Italian model; they flourished for a time under the Pyne and Harrison management, and since then have been reduced to about two, viz., *The Bohemian Girl* and *Maritana*, which are used as a safe Saturday night's attraction in the provinces by the travelling companies. It would not become me to say anything of the merits of these works, but I cannot help feeling that they have had a very good *run*; and I have heard with delight that they have been bought up by Mr. Carl Rosa, as being the only two native works worth investing in.

And now as to what can be done for English opera. I maintain that we have the material for singers, chorus, orchestra, *mise-en-scène* and stage management to produce works that will take their position as much as French opera has in Paris—either grand or comic opera. I leave opera bouffe out of the question—there is no such a thing as English opera bouffe, unless it be one of Mr. Byron's Gaiety burlesques, with original instead of selected music, and as the performers cannot by any stretch of imagination be called singers, the latter arrangement leads to quite as satisfactory results.

With regard to composers, they would be forthcoming were there an establishment where their works could be given. For a composer to succeed he must have a certain amount of dramatic instinct, only to be acquired by constant observation and contact with the stage; but as no opportunity is given composers for any such study, except the tradition of the Italian stage, they give up all thought of working for what might become a European reputation, and are content (or otherwise) to write ballads. *Il faut vivre.*

To produce a good English opera requires—1st, a good dramatic constructor; 2nd, a poet for the lyrics; 3rd, a good stage manager; and all these must work with the composer (which they cannot do if he himself has no knowledge of the stage).

Next, we want singers. These would be forthcoming if the school was once established. Lastly, we want a public to appreciate and support native art. The latter would follow on the fulfilment of the other conditions. If any one doubts it, I have only to point to recent events at the Opera Comique.

MR. MONTAGUE AND AMERICA.

By Joseph Hatton.

IT is as difficult for the average London play-goer to realise the distinguished position which the late Henry J. Montague reached in America, as it is to understand by what special merit he was enabled to achieve the topmost height of popularity in the critical city of New York.

In London he was little more than a clever walking gentleman. He had a growing circle of admirers it is true, and many friends. By these, however, he was only counted a refined and promising actor of light comedy. He was handsome. He made love with the earnest politeness of a gentleman, but without the passion of a man. He had an educated voice and manner. If his impersonations were wanting in force, they never lacked earnestness. A rare quality, earnestness is absolutely necessary to success in any walk of life. Dickens said there was no substitute for it, and he knew. Irving's earnestness often wholly conquers studied and premeditated detraction. It is his honesty of purpose, as much as his undoubted power and personal magnetism, that has surrounded him with cultured friends, and placed his name side by side with the greatest of English actors. Montague had sufficient of this fine quality to win the confidence and respect of an audience, but not enough to be aggressive in his domination of its feelings. He might lead it, he could not drive it, he could not hold it without its own consent and desire. A great artist plays upon his audience, sounding its deepest notes, probing the very heart of its mystery. Montague had this power only in a minor degree. He possessed the best characteristics of an actor, but they were not accentuated by physical or intellectual strength. His desire on and off the stage was rather to conciliate criticism than to challenge it. He had what phrenologists call the organ of "a desire to please." He liked to be liked. He had not the courage of conscious power which prompts genius to aim at the conquest of Public Opinion, that fickle tyrant which the English Press leads hither and thither, not by a silken thread, but as a bear is lead, sometimes with a muzzle, always in a halter. He was the sort of artist, as we remember him in London, who fears to ruffle critical susceptibilities. Even the *Superfine Review* must have paused ere it could raise its decrepit arm against him. Genial, amiable, sensitive, he was as careful not to excite opposition on the stage as he was to avoid it at his club; while his "desire to please" led him into promises and responsibilities of courtesy, which he sometimes

found it difficult to redeem. He was, in short, the kind of man who is known as a good fellow; and in Art he might be called the ideal walking gentleman of the Robertson school of comedy.

America is just the country to bring out all the better qualities of a nature such as this; just the country to develop any latent power which might remain dormant in London. The real equality which obtains in New York society would give strength to the tender impulses of Montague's disposition. Free from the blighting influences of lordly patrons (who too often narrow the aspirations of young actors, leading them to lavish upon the hollow shrine of Society time and talent which belong to Art) Montague would not fail to gain courage in the island city. His gentleness, his handsome face, his suavity of manner, would be sure to win him friends. That he went to America unheralded was in his favour. It is a mistake to think that "preliminary puffs" are necessary to secure a successful *debut* in the United States. They have a habit of judging men and things on their merits, our cousins of America, and they offer to actors fair, not to say generous, opportunities of demonstrating their powers. Though they have not yet learnt the civilized practice of hissing an artist or a play, they know how to show their disapprobation by rows of empty benches; while, for an entertainment which they like, they have a wealth of applause and support. Montague was fortunate in the theatre where he was engaged and in the parts he played. He pleased the New York people. They liked his appearance, he realized their ideal of a gentleman, his elocution betrayed no objectionable mannerism, and his method recommended itself to them by its modesty and intelligence. The press treated him with marked consideration, and he became a favourite at the clubs and in social circles.

Thus encouraged, the young actor no doubt found the love for his art lifted into a higher range of hope and effort by the successful practice of it among sympathizing spectators. Then an Englishman, I fancy, tries to be at his best more than ever he tried in his life when before the public of another country. Like Professor Doyle's private of the Buffs, he feels it incumbent upon him to uphold the British name. Montague had every inducement of interest, necessity, and kindly encouragement to put out all his strength. Prompted by generous applause, he attempted higher flights than he would have dared in London. If he failed in his assumptions of classic roles that were beyond his powers, he was commended for his industry, not snubbed for his temerity, as he might have been on this side of the Atlantic. He dared do all he could in America, and the result was that he reached further and climbed higher than ever he might have hoped to do in England.

Then it must not be forgotten that it is nearly four years since he left London. It is only reasonable to credit him with progress in his profession during that period. He had undoubtedly advanced. Two years ago when I saw him in New York, his style had greatly matured. He made his effects with more finish than hitherto. The confidence of success had given a certain robustness to his creations. They were less dependent upon accuracy of dress and pose of figure than heretofore. There was more spontaneity in his style. He had a firmer grasp of his work. He had a command of the pardonable tricks of the actor's art, its technicalities, its mechanism in fact, for there is no profession without its groundwork of mechanical drudgery; and in his case there had not been time for the practice of these subtleties to degenerate into staginess. Young as he was, he had possibly achieved the height of his knowledge and his power when he died, admired and beloved by troops of friends, men and women. A colder social atmosphere than New York would have chilled his ambition at the outset. Rough treatment would have broken him. He was peculiarly sensitive to criticism. If New York society could be typified by a big, strong generous man, it might be said that the consciousness of a giant's strength made it a pleasant task to foster and help this amiable, gentlemanlike, pleasant actor. No artist ever received more hospitable treatment than America bestowed upon Montague. In his death it almost seems as if the nation itself found a cause of sorrow. The papers recorded his ending in universal terms of regret. The manner of it was chronicled with affecting pathos; and what is more sad than to die young in the midst of prosperity and on the high road to fame and wealth? The press of San Francisco and New York rivalled each other in reports of the funeral arrangements. It was like reading of the obsequies of a prince, some of these accounts of the last ceremonies attending the remains of the young Englishman. London surely owes an especial debt to our cousins over the water in regard to this touching solicitude for its young artist, who left us to better his fortune, landing in a strange city unheralded, almost unknown, and having left the friends of his youth three thousand miles behind him. His last words, "It is no use—God bless you all," are a pathetic tribute to the affection of his new friends, and they sound the key-note to a generous and grateful heart.

TREASURY-DAY.

By Henry S. Leigh.

On the search for new pleasures afar may we roam,
Still the dearest are nearest at hand :—
What a source of enjoyment awaits me at home
In my Saturday stroll through the Strand !
You may waft me to scenes that are brilliant and bright—
Among folks that are gleesome and gay ;—
But you scarce can procure me as welcome a sight
As the Strand upon Treasury-Day.

There is mirth in the breezes and mirth in the skies,
And the Children of Thespis are glad.
While he hurries to grasp his hebdomadal prize
Could the mime or the mummer be sad ?
See, the gait is defiant, the visage serene,
As he strides like a wolf to the prey.
Sunny Hope—sunny Faith—in their triumph are seen
In the Strand upon Treasury-Day.

And the nymphs of the chorus are here in their might,
And the nymphs of the ballet beside :—
Though their spoil of the week may be shamefully slight,
They receive it with innocent pride.
'T is a shame—such a grossly inadequate price
For such talent and beauty to pay !
Still they seem pretty happy—and look very nice
In the Strand upon Treasury-Day.

If you strayed with me, reader, up Wellington-street,
And its neighbouring street—christened Bow—
A disconsolate crew in the last we should meet,
Pacing idly the flags to and fro.
Let us pity them, reader, while passing along ;—
The poor players with nothing to play.
Not for *them* the delights of yon salaried throng
In the Strand upon Treasury-Day !

I've a faith in the Drama.—Some folks may complain
That the Drama declines now and then,—
And that actors are jealous, and fretful, and vain,
Like the rest of the children of men.
Well, I'm not over young—though perhaps very green—
And I think I may venture to say,
There is nothing but friendship and smiles to be seen
In the Strand upon Treasury-Day.

Portraits.

VI.—MR. HENRY J. BYRON.

IT is in one of the southern suburbs of London, far from the busy haunts of men, that the author of *Our Boys* produces the many plays and burlesques which have rendered his name a household word with the theatre-going community. He rises with or soon after the sun, and from that time until his dinner hour is usually at work. Unlike the majority of authors, he affects no room in particular, but writes wherever his fancy happens to dictate. He "never makes a labour of a pleasure," and accordingly throws down the pen if he finds that he is not in the vein. No noise disturbs him except whistling and whispering, but while engaged in constructing a piece he shuts himself up against interruption. Those who speak of Mr. Byron's contributions to the stage as dashed off without much or perhaps any previous consideration are sadly in error. He spends a good deal of time in devising his plots and the mode in which they are developed, in fixing the motives and the distinctive peculiarities of his characters, and even in marking the entrances and exits. Not until this part of his task is accomplished does he proceed with the dialogue, which to him is a comparatively easy matter. He might emphatically say with Racine, "Quand mon plan est achevé mon ouvrage est fini." The sound of the dinner-bell is accepted by him as a signal for the cessation of the day's work; his evenings are invariably devoted to acting, play-going, or to agreeable social intercourse.

Mr. Byron is nearly akin to the author of *Childe Harold*, and might accordingly indulge in some pride of birth if he were so disposed. The Byrons, or Burons, deduce from the Conquest, are mentioned in Domesday Book, and fought against Richard III. at Bosworth and for Charles I. at Edgehill and Roundaway Down. The actor-dramatist's grandfather, Henry Byron, rector of Muston, was first cousin to the great poet; his father, British Consul at Hayti. Born at Manchester in 1835, Mr. Byron was educated, first at a school in Essex, and finally at St. Peter's College, Eaton-square. He was intended by his father for the navy; but, although the Hon. Mrs. Leigh, "my sweet sister," procured him a cadetship, he resolutely set his face against the project. Medicine was next proposed, but after a taste of this he went into the country as an actor. In one of his writings he tells us of the hardships and vicissitudes he endured — how he had to play

THE THEATRE No. 3 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Yours sincerely,
H. J. Byron.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

eighteen parts in one week, sing between the acts, and content himself with half of the very moderate salary at which he was engaged. Disgusted with this life, he entered as a student at the Middle Temple, but instead of going to the bar became a writer for the stage. His first piece, a burlesque of *Fra Diavolo*, was brought out at the Strand Theatre in 1858. Its success was such that other parodies from the same pen appeared in rapid succession, and their piquancy and humour, joined to the acting of such artists as Miss Marie Wilton, Mr. John Clarke, Miss Oliver, and Miss Maria Simpson, soon made them the talk of the town. In 1865 Mr. Byron took part with Miss Wilton in converting the Queen's Theatre into the Prince of Wales's, for which he wrote more than one attractive piece. From this time the sphere of his exertions was considerably widened. In addition to burlesques, he wrote melodrama after melodrama, and with *Cyril's Success*, produced in 1868, the long list of the peculiar comedies for which he is best known may be said to have commenced. Since 1858 he has contributed upwards of a hundred pieces to the stage; but even such an amount of work as this has never exhausted his energies. He has edited *Fun*, contributed to *Punch*, thrown off many dramatic criticisms and leading articles, written *Paid in Full* and another novel, and not unfrequently played in his own pieces.

Intellectually and socially, Mr. Byron has already left a distinct mark upon his time. When he takes up the pen Thalia assumes an unusually riant aspect. In most of his comedies an element of rather broad farce is introduced. Formerly the two things would have been deemed incongruous, but public taste in this respect has undergone a change. The qualities of Mr. Byron's plays need only be glanced at here. His plots are often weak and comparatively void of incident, although, as we have seen, he takes more pains with them than the majority of the critics give him credit for. For this weakness, however, we have abundant compensation. His plays are full of human interest. The dialogue sparkles with wit and repartee. The *dramatis personæ* are distinctly drawn and effectively contrasted. In delineating character, perhaps, Mr. Byron is at his best. Think, for instance, of the butterman in *Our Boys*, the crushed tragedian in the *Prompter's Box*, the baronet in *Not Such a Fool as He Looks*, or the doleful clown who "doesn't like to be laughed at." Mr. Byron's acting is marked by ease and keen perception, and in the art of delivering sprightly dialogue he is without a rival. In private life he is much esteemed. He is not spoiled even by the success of *Our Boys*. He brought out Mr. T. W. Robertson and discovered Mr. Gilbert, and has never been jealous of anybody.

The Day Will Come.

A NOVELETTE IN THREE PARTS.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

I.—My Story.
II.—His Story.
III.—Our Story.

PART III.

Our Story.—Looking back—An old man's reflections—The compact—I return to England—Elmsfield theatre—On and off the stage—We meet again, we lovers true—I beard the lion in his den—Between darkness and dawn—On the watch—Wedding bells—His sad pale face—The red day comes—An act of vengeance—The end.

IF we were to set down plainly and honestly the common events of our lives, coupled with the incidents of adventure with which we are made acquainted in passing through the world, how much more remarkable these histories would be than the romances of Fiction! I have been told by an eminent novelist that the truest portions of his books are oftenest regarded as false, and that the purely imaginative passages get commended for their realism. There are writers who can only tell one story well, one-book novelists, who deal with their own personal records, and have then no more to say. Invention of plot was not necessary at the outset; they forget that when they come to the real work of romance. If there be anything of genuine merit in this story, the reader will judge of it from the stand-point of this confession. I, Hicory Maynard, declare that this is my first printed narrative. When, however, I compare it with the events that are continually transpiring in London, the strangeness of it sinks into common-place, even in my eyes. Every day in this vast metropolis, what mysteries are going on, how many people disappear and leave no trace, what dark deeds are done, what mad dramas of real life are enacted! Add to these, some histories of the mining camps beyond the seas that stretch out skeleton arms towards London, and what startling pages might be inspired of Fate! The romance of my life links Silver Bar and this metropolis together, and the two find culminating scenes in that little town of Elmsfield, where the wolf, Lust, fell upon the lamb Vanity in those dark days of George Newbolde's unhappy youth.

It is not yesterday by many a year that these things happened. The shadows have gathered about them. Through the clouds which fall over them, I hear the sounds of a distant time. I, too, have stood upon that bridge by the factory; I, too, have listened to the music of the river; I, too, have heard the factory song. But, above all, I hear wedding bells, and in these latter days children's voices fall sweetly on my ear. Looking back over the long years it is difficult not to wander and become garrulous. But resuming the track of one's history, the story comes uppermost, fresh and clear as ever. Memory has laid down the landmarks. Let me trace them through, from the days when we parted, George and I, far away at Pendleton's Gulch, in the gold-regions of California.

He was true to his word, I to mine. He had the right to command; it was for me to obey. But there was a struggle between sorrow and gladness in my heart as the good ship, *Celtic,* bounded over the waves for dear old England with me and my fortunes aboard. I was sorry for Newbolde. I had grown to like him. It was painful to have such a secret as that he had loaded me with. Meggie I am sure would have experienced a new sense of joy in the discovery that she had a brother. I had appealed to him in vain. "What the eye does not see, the heart does not grieve for," he had said. If she could suffer by not knowing him, then he said he would only too gladly proclaim himself, even, perhaps, at the sacrifice of his righteous vengeance. But for her he had no existence. She did not even remember him. That only increased the debt which Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby owed him, for my dear girl's persecutor was the wolf of George Newbolde's touching story. We often unwittingly touch shoulders with Destiny in the street. Presently Fate lays his hand upon us, and we become an active participator in some undreamt of romance, perhaps its central figure. That night, when I went to the Adelphi Theatre for the first time in my life, Fate may be said to have stood at the door, and handed in my checks.

I was glad of course to be journeying to London, redeemed from my poverty, comparatively rich, quite rich enough to marry Meggie and settle a thousand a year upon her. It is a good place to think on the deck of an ocean steamer in the middle of the Atlantic. How I used to trace the short history of my life all over and over again in my mind, dwelling more particularly upon Meggie and the day we parted. "If you come back poorer than you are now that will make no difference to my plighted troth." I could see her dear face as she said it, the tears in her eyes, her lip quivering with emotion. What a memory Love has! I could recall her every

look, as I sat gazing out to sea, and counting the strokes of the engine which brought me nearer and nearer to England. Then these sad mysterious words, "I am an orphan, and a nameless one; I really don't know who I am," they would come back to me coupled with George Newbolde's exclamation, "God help her no! But I do—my sister Meg, my little sister Meg." But this I had to forget. He had done me no harm he said, why couldn't I forget him? Heaven forgive the mad cynical adventurer no, he had helped me, protected me; indeed, it is only doing him justice to say that he made me rich. But at a heavy cost, at a price which I have found it hard to pay. There are secrets and secrets. Surely neither oath nor honour bind me to keep this one for ever.

When I reached London I did not find my dear girl there. She was "starring" in the provinces. My mother received me with open arms. She laid her head on my shoulder and wept with joy. We both cried I think. It is a sacred thing a mother's love. There is no other love so unselfish, so broad, so beautiful. Not to have been blessed with that, George Newbolde might well be a castaway upon the earth, a waif and stray. He was as a ship without ballast, his compass always pointing to the stormy course. It was with many cheering words that my mother at length consented that I should follow Meggie with whom she was in constant correspondence. It did not escape my mother that the expression of my face suddenly changed when she gave me Margaret's latest address.

"Elmsfield!" I exclaimed, "in the Midlands?"

"Yes, dear," she said, "why are you so surprised?"

"I have heard that it is a cruel place," was the readiest and most useful answer I could think of without lying.

"Indeed, how? Cruel to actors. But you must remember they are not all like our dear Margaret. When I was a girl in Somersetshire, I remember that they were all treated as vagrants, and on the same level as the show-people at the fairs. Times are changed now."

"And very properly, mother."

"Yes, dear, no doubt, but you will take Margaret from the stage; you will not let her act when she is Mrs. Maynard?"

"No, I should be too jealous, I should resent even the applause of an audience; and the criticism of fellows who discuss actresses over their liquor would see me introducing to England the rough and ready reprisals of Silver Bar.

No man who truly loves a woman can endure her to play certain parts on the stage, he being of the audience. It is different if he is of the same profession; and even then their exercise of the same

art often leads to misunderstandings. If the wife is a better artist or more popular than her husband, she is often tempted "to lead him a life," and does, that old friend of mine who is connected with the press, says, and he is full of modern instances and examples. But all these women are different from Margaret. She has none of the manners of certain actresses when off the stage, their stereotyped gestures, their upturnings of the eye, their facial expressions of surprise, their general want of repose. How is it you can so often tell an experienced actress even when she has cut her professional sisters to move in high society and mistake patronage for distinction!

It was late at night when I arrived at Elmsfield. How I hated it for George's sake, how I loved it by and by for her's. What a strange interest it will always have for me.

I had not written to Margaret. I meant to surprise her. At the hotel they offered me supper, I asked for a play-bill. They desired to show me to my room, I asked to be conducted to the theatre. It was in a corner of the market-place, down a yard and up a passage. Theatres in small towns are always ignominiously situated, as if their builders had been ashamed of their work and wished to hide it. Terpsichore belonged to the slums when I was a boy. Latterly it has begun to show itself in leading thoroughfares. There are provincial cities I believe where the theatre is not ashamed even to look the Town Hall straight in the face. This was not the case at Elmsfield. Down a yard and up a passage as I said before the theatre of this midland town was worthy of the God-forsaken look of the brick borough itself. A hot breeze met me at the door as if it had swept over a desert of naphtha and sawdust. I wanted to see my dear girl without interrupting the play. It would never have done for me to go to the stage door, I should have interfered with her work and possibly have encountered some rudeness at the hands of Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby, who would have found me in no mood to receive a continuation of his former insults. I therefore "went in front," as they say. Judge of my surprise when I found myself attracted not to the stage but to a face in the back boxes, a pale face that turned its dark sunken eyes upon me as I came in. George Newbolde was here before me. He had disappeared from Silver Bar the day after we had settled our affairs. They told me at the saloon that he had "gone on a bender down to Frisco." I waited three weeks for him to return. The operation of our bargain had really begun. We were to be strangers evermore. I was to forget him. This wild pledge occurred to me as I stood in the Elmsfield theatre looking at his calm sad face. My first impulse was to rush up to him. He detected it, and acted a quiet unconcern which he could not have felt, for he had shown

me in those wild regions beyond the sea that he had a heart in which tenderness had not been altogether eclipsed by hatred and passion.

While I stood hesitating the curtain went up on the closing scenes of the play. It was a melodrama called *The Miser's Secret*, in which "the eminent London tragedian Miss Willoughby" played the miser's daughter. The *dénoûement* so far as I could gather would establish the parentage of the heroine whose entrance was the signal for rounds of applause. There were two persons in the house who did not lift a hand but whose hearts were full of emotion. Not that George Newbolde betrayed any sign of feeling. He sat in the shadow of a folded curtain immoveable as a statue. My heart seemed to stand still for a moment and then to beat with joy. I felt the blood rush into my face. My eyes feasted upon the dear girl. She had never looked so handsome as at this moment. I followed her through the action of the story, dwelling upon her words, and yet hoping that every scene was the last. When presently she was acknowledged by her true father and she fell weeping into his arms, I turned to see what effect the scene had upon the silent figure behind me. The hero of Silver Bar had left the house. I hurried out and found my way to the stage door. A liberal tip induced the porter to send my name to Miss Willoughby's room, for I had determined not to try her with the surprise of a too sudden meeting.

"Miss Willoughby 'll come out soon," said the man when he returned.

"Is that the answer" I asked, it seemed so cold and formal.

"Yes."

"Is that all she said"?

"Yes."

"She did not ask me to come in"?

"No."

"Nor request me to wait?"

"Hang it, haven't I told you!" he answered impatiently.

How unreasonable love is, how exacting, how self-important! I was disappointed, angry, jealous, all in a moment. I leaned against the dirty door-post full of doubts and fears.

"Is her father in the theatre?"

"Mr. Willoughby?" asked the man.

"Yes, yes, her father."

"Mr. Willoughby isn't in the theatre."

"Well, why couldn't you say so before?"

"How did I know as he were her father? they have so many relations, these travelling stars."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing, I ain't paid well enough to mean anything."

"You are a brute."

"There's a many about" said the fellow, busying himself with a saucepan in which something was being cooked on a slow smouldering fire.

Several slipshod people came out as I stood there with my pride under this common fellow's feet. They uttered some coarse jests as they passed through the dirty room. And I am to take my wife from a place like this! I wonder if that cruel thought would have come into my mind if I had not felt hurt at my darling's message. Presently a well dressed gentleman came out. He was the leading man of the company. He passed on his way with a quiet air of dignity that reconciled me a little more to the society in which Meggie was moving.

"Hickory, my dear Hickory!" suddenly broke in upon my unworthy reflections like a burst of sweet music.

It was Meggie. The next moment she was in my arms. I saw that surly porter look up and move away again with a contemptuous grimace. I would have kissed her before all the world.

"Let me look at you," I said, holding her now at arm's-length. The flare of the gas-light fell upon her smiling face. How pretty she was!

"Well?" she said, her bright eyes dancing with pleasure.

"My darling! No, you are not changed, unless you are sweeter and more beautiful than ever."

She had on a long black cloak, a dark bonnet, with a white rose in it, and a lace muffler round her neck. If she had looked charming upon the stage in white satin and mock-jewels, how much more attractive was she to me in this quiet unpretentious dress. I can see her now, a picture of innocence and beauty, standing in the door-way of that stage-porter's den.

"Come along, dear," she said, taking my arm and hurrying me out into the dim portals of the theatre; "there, you may kiss me again!"

I did.

"You can't dream how happy I am!" she said; "I couldn't ask you to come in there, it is such a dirty place, and besides I had not a dressing-room of my own; Miss Lockfield was with me. And how are you, when did you come, and why didn't you write and tell me?"

She asked me a hundred questions, and I pressed her arm in mine, and upbraided myself mentally for letting my impatience to see her create the shadow of a doubt of her. It was an autumn

night, dry and fine. There was no moon, but thousands of stars seemed to look down upon us with friendly eyes.

As we entered Mr. Willoughby's lodgings a man walked by on the other side of the road. I saw his face under the gas-lamp. George Newbolde was watching over his sister. I shuddered to think what else his presence here might mean.

"So you have come back," said Mr. Willoughby, when Meggie had left the room, "a rich man, or you would not have the audacity to show your face here."

"Why here particularly?" I asked. "Is there anything in Elmsfield that makes my conduct any more audacious?"

I looked straight into his eyes, for now that I knew him truly, my soul rebelled against him.

"What do you know about Elmsfield?" he said, quickly.

"That I find Miss Willoughby here, and that we intend to be married here."

I knew my power, and was resolved not again to submit to this imposter's browbeating. What strength money gives you in a fight of this kind!

"Oh, indeed!" he said, rising and standing with his back to the fire; "do you know to whom you are talking?"

"Yes, quite well."

Visions of George Newbolde, visions holding up warning fingers flashed through my mind, but I could not restrain myself before this scoundrel. When I said quite well I sat down and looked up at him. His cruel eyes winced.

"What do you mean when you say you know me quite well?"

"What I say, exactly."

"And what do you know?"

"That I am going to marry the girl, to whom I am engaged, at the parish church of Elmsfield."

It was not I suspect the words so much as the manner in which I uttered them that troubled Mr. Fitzherbert Willoughby. He drew his breath quickly, he walked to the other end of the room, he locked the door on the inside, he put the key in his pocket. I noted his doings without moving.

"Now, look here, Mr. Maynard, you think you know something about me that gives you the right to be insolent. What is it?"

He stood over me in a threatening attitude.

"Is it necessary that we should talk with locked doors?"

"It is necessary that you should explain yourself before you eave this room."

I shrugged my shoulders. There was a knock at the door.

"Not yet, dear," he said, in the blandest tones, "not yet.

Mr. Maynard, and myself are arranging matters, go to your room. We will desire your presence soon, unless you are tired and would prefer to go to bed."

He unlocked the door as he spoke, and locked it again, locked it stealthily.

"Well, Mr. Hickory Maynard, is it to be war or peace between us?"

"As you please; but for Margaret's sake, peace would be preferable."

"On what conditions?"

I thought of my bond with Newbolde.

"We marry here at once, and leave England for a long continental tour."

"And what becomes of me?"

"Heaven is good, it will no doubt take care of you as heretofore."

"You don't speak to me in this way on the strength of your money, Mr. Maynard. You are much changed since last we met.

"If you mean I no longer fear you,—yes, I am; I have seen the world."

"Yes, I see you have. Now, listen to me. My daughter will never marry without my consent. That consent must be paid for handsomely, since the man who takes her from me robs me of my income."

"I will endow you on one condition, that you never come near us under any circumstances."

"You are very kind, there is no love lost between us."

"None."

"Suppose I don't give my consent?"

"I will marry her without it."

"Curse you, I see you would!" he exclaimed. "What is it you think you know about me that you treat me like this?"

The thought that I had somehow probed his history maddened him.

"I'll tell you what it is my fine friend," he said, "if you and I were in Venice, one of us would be missing in the morning."

"Why in Venice?" I said, rising and putting myself on guard, "Elmsfield has a sufficiently cut-throat look, and the river here is deep, too, I've heard."

"Yes, yes," he said, as if putting my answer aside. "What fools we are! What are we quarrelling about? I don't desire anything but a peaceful settlement."

He sat down, trying to seem unconcerned, but his agitation was great. It was my turn now.

"Very well; then you agree to my terms?"

"Yes, anything to oblige my daughter; why I have allowed you to put me out of temper I can't imagine."

"She will be married in her proper name?"

"Her proper name!" he exclaimed, once more rising to his feet.

"Margaret Newbolde," I said.

He did not speak. He looked at me as if he would spring at my throat. Then suddenly waving his hands as much as to say it is all over, he took the door-key from his pocket and laid it on the table.

"The game is yours, Mr. Maynard," he said, "unlock the door. But first let me ask, did she know what cards you held?"

"She only knows I have returned."

"Shall you tell her?"

"Not yet."

"And what is your last card, Mr. Maynard?"

"The deuce" I said, falling unconsciously into his simile, "otherwise Faustin Welby."

He sighed and leaned forward, pressing his hands upon his knees.

"Give me a few minutes," he whispered in a hoarse voice, "leave it to me; don't tell her until I have cleared out; give me a drink, you seem to have paralysed me. You played the game like a professional. That's the gin, close by you; thanks."

He drank off a tumbler full, pulled himself together, took up the key, unlocked the door, and called Meggie down.

"There, my darling, say good night to Mr. Maynard; we have settled everything, your marriage takes place immediately."

She looked at both of us inquiringly.

"Don't stay now love, it is very late," he said; "Mr. Maynard will call in the morning."

I followed her into the hall and whispered hastily in her ear, "Lock and bolt your door—don't be persuaded to open it on any account," for I had a sudden inspiration of fear.

"Good night, sir," said Welby, "don't ask me to extend this interview. We breakfast at ten, I hold myself at your command."

As I walked to my hotel I blamed my haste in showing my hand; and it occurred to me that I had scarcely been true to my word, given to Newbolde. I did not go into the hotel. I walked back to the street I had just left. Welby might avenge himself on Meggie. I stood before the house. The lights were all out. The street was still as death, and dark as pitch. Not even a reveller disturbed the silence. It was the darkness before dawn. In the distance the lights disappeared one after the other; they were economical in the matter of gas at Elmsfield.

"Maynard," said a voice I knew, and a hand was laid on my arm, "You were indiscreet but I forgive you, I envied you; but I play the next hand."

"George," I said "it is you! For God's sake let this affair rest here."

"I shall," he said, "I shall."

"But let your sister know she has a brother."

"No, no. I claim the fulfilment of our bond; if you think I break it by speaking to you, consider it is a stranger who addresses you; a vessel at sea has signalled you in the night, you have spoken her, and there's an end."

There was no resisting him.

"She is safe, you may go," he said.

I often wonder if I did the right thing in keeping this obstinate man's secret; it seems to me that I should have flung myself across his path that night at Elmsfield, for though I only suspected half his designs, I ought to have known that his mission of vengeance could only end in bloodshed. Yet when I saw his face in the old church on the day of our marriage, it wore an expression of content. Why couldn't he have completed his happiness and ours? Because he would not tarnish her life and name with crime. That only could have been the reason. He had hunted this man through the world, this assassin of his father, this murderer of his house: Meggie knew nothing of him or his mission. It would have been a cruel thing to load her soul with black memories. I have no doubt that is how George Newbolde argued. I shall never forget his look of satisfaction as we left the church and the bells began to ring. Our eyes met and I thought he smiled. It would have been a crowning feature of the day's bliss if I could have beckoned him and said "Meggie, this is your brother and my dearest friend." Revenge must have a fierce fascination when it can reject so much happiness for a savage joy, brief as it is unholy.

It was nearly twenty years since that day when they took George Newbolde's father out of the water by the bridge over which he used to carry his son on his broad manly shoulders. The river went gurgling on just the same except that there were new eddies here and there for an hour or two where the drags had disturbed the bed of the stream. When the son who had become a man stood there twenty years afterwards, it seemed as if nothing had changed. The factory hard by flashed its windows in the Autumn sunset. The wheels flying round and round could be seen from the bridge, and the plash of the river, as it came rushing

down the distant hill mingled its music with the songs of the women in the factory. Perhaps some of the trees by the bridge had stretched their arms further across the stream; the shadows might have been darker than heretofore. The busy factory seemed to sanctify the green fields with the sweet breath of industry. He stood there counting up the might-have-beens, this lonely wanderer who had been a child in these meadows, a fatal reckoning for Faustin Welby, the wolf who had fallen upon the little fold. It was late in the day to avenge even so bitter a crime, nor does one crime justify another. It might have been hoped that the sound of our wedding bells and the peaceful music of the river would soften George Newbolde's heart; but they could only have stimulated his wild desire to fulfil what he regarded as the mission of his life, the avenging of his father's honour, the punishment of his father's murderer.

We had been in Italy two months when I read in a French journal, a paragraph which had been translated from a London paper and embellished during the process. I re-translate it, the style falling more naturally into the character of the incident when read in the light of this previous narrative:—

"A grand act of vengeance has been perpetrated at a little city in England, called Elmsfield. It is worthy of a more excitable race than the phlegmatic community whose history it adorns. Twenty years since an easy-going inventor fell into the snares of a *roué* named Faustin Welby, otherwise Fitzherbert Willoughby, who robbed him of his wife, and afterwards, no doubt is now felt about it, encompassed the husband's death; though the verdict of the inquest on his body resulted in what is called the open decision of 'Found Drowned.' Welby and the false wife disappeared. Within the last month it appears he had the temerity to return to Elmsfield, where, however, he was quite justified in considering himself safe, for no one there was likely to recognise in the pompous elderly exquisite Willoughby, the former mill-owner and reprobate Welby. He appeared here as the father of a famous young artiste, and acted also as her agent. She was the youngest child of the dead inventor, Newbolde, and had been brought up as Welby's daughter. How slowly but yet surely the avenging-hand of Fate sometimes at long intervals in man's history follows the evil-doer! The mystery however is complete in this dark but dramatic transaction. Miss Willoughby was married at the parish church in her proper name of Newbolde, to a gentleman of good family, Mr. Hickory Maynard, at Elmsfield, where she was born. The inference is that Welby, hoping to do tardy justice to the poor child, confessed that he was not her father, for Mr. Maynard presented him with a thousand English sovereigns on the day of the marriage. The happy young people are now on the continent, but they will doubtless be interrogated and we may learn more of this romantic affair. Two days after the marriage, the foreman of the net factory, where the inventor

Newbolde had been employed twenty years before by his supposed murderer as well as the dishonourer of his house, this foreman found fastened upon the bridge a notice written in a bold hand; '*Search the river where you found George Newbolde twenty years ago this day.*' They came upon the body of Faustin Welby; he held in his right hand a scrap of paper upon which was deciphered, written in the same hand as that which penned the above notice—'*Seducer, murderer—to all such the day will come. Verdict, Found drowned.*' Though many reports speak of a mysterious stranger having been seen in Elmsfield, a factory-hand saying he heard voices late at night as he was crossing the fields near the bridge, one supplicating and the other saying 'Down on your knees, down on your knees' and that he hurried home because he was afraid, the jurymen have accepted the dictum of the avenger and recorded the same verdict as that which furnished the inquiry into the death of the man whom all now believe to have been murdered—*Found drowned.* And yet we Frenchmen say the English life has no romance!"

And so George Newbolde had swept to his revenge. I read the paragraph with a certain sensation of awe, but not with any sorrow for the dead man. Two years at Pendleton's Gulch had made me familiar with the rough justice of uncontrolled miners, outside the influence of women, and I am free to confess that I admired the man who had thus avenged his father. But with the lapse of years and a better understanding of the duties and responsibilities of life, I have, I trust, recovered from that former state of mind. I did not read the paragraph to Margaret, but I extended our honeymoon tour not only over months, but years. We travelled through many lands, and were neither of us, strange to say, ever called upon to make any explanation to the authorities of Elmsfield. A local preacher discovered that Willoughby was his brother, and my thousand pounds I hope did him good. I never saw George Newbolde again. He returned to Silver Bar, however, and by a recent mail I learn that the boys of Pendleton's Gulch, which has now become an important Californian settlement, have erected a monument to his memory, and engraven upon it the motto with which he used to cheer every young prospecter and digger whom he considered worthy of his advice and encouragement,—*The Day will Come.*

En Passant.

MADAME PATTI recently narrated the story of her early life to Dr. Edward Hanslick, of Milan. She was born at Madrid in 1843. Her father was a Sicilian, and her mother a Roman, and both were excellent singers. In her childhood the family migrated to New York, where she became proficient in modern languages, and was taught by her stepbrother to sing. The lessons in singing were continued by Mr. Maurice Strakosch, who married her elder sister, Amelia. "A musical ear and the capacity and desire to sing," says the *diva*, "were developed in me at an early age. Whenever my mother sang I was at the theatre, and every melody, every gesture became firmly impressed on my mind. After being put to bed, I would secretly get up, and by the light of the little lamp enact, for my own satisfaction, all the scenes which I had witnessed at the theatre. A red-lined cloak of my father's and an old hat of my mother's served me as costume, and thus I acted, danced, and chirped—barefooted, but with romantic drapery—through all the operas. Applause and wreaths were not lacking, either; for I personated, too, my audience, applauded and threw bouquets at myself—bouquets manufactured of old newspapers. Then bitter misfortune befel us; the manager failed, and disappeared without paying his debts, and the troupe dispersed. Before long we were harassed by poverty and trouble. My father carried many things to the pawn-shop, and sometimes knew not how to procure bread for us. The thought occurred to my father that my childish voice would save the family from starvation. And, thank God, I did save them. When seven years of age I appeared as a concert singer, and did it with all the pleasure and careless gladness of a child. In the concert-hall I stood on a table, next to the piano, so that the audience could see "the little doll." And what do you think I first sang? Why, nothing but *bravura* arias; first, "Una voce poco fa," with the same ornamentation and exactly as I sing it to-day. I had the happiness of seeing the pawned clothing and trinkets return, and we again lived a comfortable life. Thus a few years passed, during which I played and sang industriously with my sister Carlotta. My ability and my love for the stage largely increased, and in 1859, when but a half-grown girl, I stepped on the stage for the first time as Lucia di Lammermoor."

FURTHER particulars as to the "statement" of John Wilkes Booth have just come to light. On the night of the assassination of Mr. Lincoln there was a private dinner-party in a back room at Wormley's restaurant, in Washington. General Baird, Mr. Robert Johnson, the Hon. Samuel Randall, Mr. John Morrissey, Mr. John F. Coyle (editor of the *National Intelligencer*), and one other gentleman, were present. During the

progress of the dinner a waiter came in and stated that the President had been shot at Ford's Theatre. The news created great consternation in the party, who at first thought the waiter was drunk or crazy. Later on, when they were assured that it was a fact, and that Booth was accused of the crime, Mr. Coyle, with blanched features and trembling lips, said: "My God, gentlemen, this very day I met John Wilkes Booth in the market space. He was on a bay mare, and rode up to me and handed me a sealed envelope, saying, as he did so: 'If you hear of me in twenty-four hours publish this. If you do not hear of me in that time destroy this,' and he rode away. Here is the package," said Mr. Coyle, producing a large envelope from his pocket, "What must I do with it?" "Destroy it at once," said Mr. Randall; "they will hang anybody who knows anything about the assassination, no matter how innocently they may have come by their knowledge. Don't open it; burn it up just as it is." "Yes," said Morrissey, "burn it at once." The doors were carefully locked, and the mysterious envelope and its contents were carefully burned. Even the ashes were carefully collected and placed in a dish, mixed with water, and made into a paste, which was afterwards put into the fire and burned again.

Last spring an American gentleman of good position wrote to Mr. Charles Reade, temperately and even deferentially setting forth some arguments against his theories as to the left hand. "My privacy," wrote the dramatist in reply, "has been intruded on by a letter from you, in which you tell me that you have only read garbled extracts from my letters denouncing the lop-handed mania, and that you are utterly ignorant of anatomy and physiology. If, having thus announced your disqualification, you had gone on to say 'and therefore I will not have the folly and the arrogance to speak positively on the matter,' I should have said, 'This dunce is not a fool,' and in a world where nearly all the dunces are fools, I should have welcomed you as a novelty. But instead of that, having announced your incapacity, you proceed to sit in judgment on your intellectual superior in a matter where he is profoundly learned, and you are as ignorant as dirt. Your letter is in three divisions—irrelevant truth, a deliberate lie, a piece of imbecile twaddle. Your bad logic.—Every fool knows that the musical performer is an honourable except to the lop-handed mania. Here both hands do skilled work, and exercise the whole brain, which is all I require. I have never proposed to reverse the skill of the two hands. You are working a folly out of your own head, and forging my name to it. Your mendacity.—That the left-handed blow of the pugilist owes its force to the right side of the body: Were this so, the right-handed blow of the pugilist would owe its force to the left side of the body. It's a lie. When a blow is struck with a sword, a stick, a cricket bat, &c., the reverse foot is advanced, and the reverse side is the fulcrum. But in the pugilist's blow, whether with right hand or left, the corresponding foot is advanced, and the blow takes all its force from the sub-clavicular muscles and the flexor and extensor muscles of the arm that

gives the blow. Of course you may not be a liar. You may be simply a chattering noodle, with no eyes in your head; but one or the other you must be, to utter so stupid a falsehood as the above, and to send it to *me*, of all people. Your imbecility.—Who doubts the existence of the lop-mania? And, so long as it does exist, of course many tools will be made to fit it; but even here your mendacity must creep in. You suppress the reaping-hook, the plane, the saw, the gauge, the knife, the hatchet, the scissors, the pen, the sword. Correct your ignorance, my good sir; and as your ignorance declines your self-sufficiency will abate, and you will not be so ready to hurl them both at your intellectual superiors, on matters where they are men and you are a child.—Charles Reade."

Mr. Toole, it may be remembered, contributed to the last number of *The Theatre* a poem in the Welsh tongue. Though assertions have been made to the contrary, every word in the composition, we can assure our readers, is of that language. It seems to us that the pathetic story set forth in these verses is not so clearly and intelligibly told as Mr. Toole appears to think, but the grace of the opening lines—

Uwch y ser hoenwych, siriol—haul ydyw
Y gwyliedydd nefol;
Hwythau, fel gronynau' n ol
O dano, yn gadwynol

—must strike every person versed in Welsh. It remains to be stated that when Mr. Toole next appears at one of the Wednesday night gatherings at the Green-Room Club he will be requested to recite the poem, and that no refusal will be taken.

It will be remembered that in the month of August two most successful pupils at the Conservatoire, Mdlle. Vaillant and M. Guitry, secretly entered into engagements to appear, the first at the Théâtre de la Monnaies, Brussels, and the other at the Gymnase. The rules passed in 1855 enacted that in return for a free education at the Conservatoire the pupils should, in the first instance, be placed at the disposal of the manager of one of the subsidised theatres. The Minister of Fine Arts accordingly brought actions against Mdlle. Vaillant and M. Guitry, who have been required by the Première Chambre du Tribunal Civil to pay each a fine of 15,000 fr. and the cost of the suit. Mdlle. Vaillant has appealed against the decision, it being understood that if the result is against her the loss is to be borne by the manager who engaged her. Meanwhile she has appeared at Brussels, and that with considerable *éclat*. It was urged in court by her counsel that as many pupils had not been held to the letter of their engagements she naturally fancied herself free, but common gratitude for the training she had received should have led her to ascertain, before she accepted the offer from the Théâtre de la Monnaie, that her services were not required in Paris.

Mr. Ho, one of the secretaries of the Chinese Legation, is translating Shakspere's plays into Chinese. It is devoutly to be hoped that he is better qualified for his task than were the educated natives of Oudh, who

undertook to give the principal soliloquies of Hamlet and Wolsey in Urdu, and whose rendering, literally retranslated into English, was as follows:—"To be or not to be. It is a doctrine that which of the two conditions should be understood best, either to remain silent before the heavy shots of the fatal death balls of a sling or of arrows of a bow, or being ready to cross the river of troubles. To die and to sleep. The result of sleeping, as it is good, is this, that by sleeping we get refreshment of our pain of heart, and the thousand troubles and fatigues concerning to the limbs of the human body, which is very necessary to nature. To die and to sleep. To sleep is perhaps to dream, which is, indeed, a doubtful subject, that when we get rid of the net of the cares of the human life. For in that sleep we shall dream wonderfully; then we shall get a time for rest. Who can bear the beating of a whip, the scorn of the world, the oppression of the tyrant, the abusing of a proud, the disappointment of an insignificant love, the command of superiors, and the disobedience of servants?" The translation of Wolsey's soliloquy was not less felicitous:—"A little kindness which has been shown on my condition has been the cause of my great praise. The men bring forth to-day the leaves of hope and to-morrow the flower, and afterwards a deep-red colour of honour and glory; and at last they are frozen by everlasting and fatal ice. . . . . When a poor man's pay is reduced without any fault, then his plight becomes like Iblis, a Satan who entertains no further hopes of the future."

Miss Stebbins's *Life of Charlotte Cushman*, reviewed in these pages last month, contains no allusion to a versified account, by Gilbert à Beckett, of the actress's impersonation of Romeo. From this account we may take the following lines:—

> What figure is that which appears on the scene?
> 'Tis Madame Macready—Miss Cushman, I mean.
> What a wondrous resemblance! the walk on the toes,
> The eloquent, short, intellectual nose;
> The bend of the knee, the slight sneer of the lip,
> The frown on the forehead, the hand on the hip.
> In the chin, in the voice, 'tis the same to a tittle,
> Miss Cushman is Mister Macready in little.
> The lady before us might very well pass
> For the gentleman viewed the wrong way of the glass.
> No fault with the striking resemblance we find,
> 'Tis not in the person alone, but the mind.

How Miss Cushman came to play Nancy Sikes is a story well worth telling. In or about 1841, while a stock actress at the Park Theatre, New York, she had the misfortune to incur the ill-will of the manager, who spitefully sent her the part because it was deemed one of the least important in the piece. Her resolution was at once taken. "What he designs for my mortification shall be my triumph." From that time until *Oliver Twist* appeared she was but seldom seen. "What," says a magazine writer, "was she doing? Studying that bare skeleton of a part—clothing it with flesh, giving it life and interest. She went down into the city slums, into Five Points, and studied the horrible life that surrounded such a

wretched existence as Nancy Sikes. In the first scene Nancy only crossed the stage, gave a sign to Oliver, who was in the hands of the officers, and then went off. It was an entrance and exit hardly noticed—a small accessory incident. But after Miss Cushman created the character this silent scene was always tremendously applauded. Instead of crossing the stage once she made three passages. Before the second the whole house came down with thundering applause. Her make-up was a marvel —an old dirty bonnet and dirt-coloured shawl; a shabby gown and shabbier shoes; a worn-out basket with some rags in it, and a key in her hand! She entered swinging the key on her finger, walked stealthily on the outside of the crowd, doubling her steps; looked with sharp cunning at the boy; attracted his attention, winked one eye, and thrust her tongue into her cheek. It was a tremendous success, and every succeeding scene sealed down her triumph and the discomfiture of the manager."

This story reminds us of Miss Cushman's wonderful make-up for Meg Merrilees—a part which she lifted far above the level on which it was originally placed. It was probably through an oversight that Mr. Winter omitted to mention her among those whose appearance on the stage was a component part of sheer art-work. "How," she was asked on one occasion, "do you know where to put in those shadows, and make those lines which so accurately give the effect of old age?" "I don't *know*," was the reply; "I only *feel* where they should come."

Corneille's *Rodogune*, it will be seen, is being played at the Odéon Theatre, with Madame Marie Laurent as Cléopâtre. The last time this tragedy was played at the Théâtre Français it was for the farewell performance of Mdlle. Georges. The curtain down, Madame Laurent, who was a protégée of the great tragédienne, went to her dressing-room and congratulated her on her success. "Ma chère enfant," said Georges, "some day you will yourself play this part. Here is the diadem I have always worn in the piece; accept it." The prediction has been fulfilled, and those who intend to witness the present revival may be interested to hear that Mdlle. Georges' diadem is worn on the stage by her successor.

It is stated that an operatic star of some note, connected with one of the principal Moscow theatres, wishing to make a short excursion into the country, went to get her passport countersigned by the local authorities. The presiding official received her politely, and, having learned her business, inquired for her "written petition." "My written petition!" cried the lady; "I have none; I never knew that anything of the kind was required." "Not required, Madam? On the contrary, nothing can be done without it." "What am I to do then?" "Nothing easier; be good enough to take this sheet of paper, and write according to my dictation." The applicant obeyed, and transcribed, word for word, a formal petition requesting leave of absence from the city for a stated time, which was then duly signed, folded and sealed. "And now," quoth the man in office, "you have only to deliver it." "To whom, pray?" "To whom?" echoed the official, with a slight smile at the absurdity of the question; "to me,

of course." The document was accordingly handed across the table. The great man adjusted his spectacles, broke the seal, gravely read over his own composition from beginning to end, folded it and docketed it with methodical slowness, and then, turning to the impatient artiste, said, with an air of official solemnity: "Madam, I have read your petition, and regret to tell you that I am unable to grant it."

The cause of the much regretted death of Mr. Montague was hemorrhage, brought on in the first instance while he was playing Lord Chilton at San Francisco. The post-mortem examination showed that in any case he could not have lived much longer. His last words were to some fellow-players who were doing what they could for him: "It's no use; I'm going. God bless you all!" There was a painful scene at the hotel just before the coffin was taken away; Miss Rose Wood threw herself frantically upon it; Miss Granger, in an agony of grief, declared she would never appear on the stage again; and Miss Jeffreys-Lewis was carried out of the room insensible. The male members of the company were scarcely less affected. The body was conveyed to and interred in New York, Mr. Boucicault and Mr. John M'Cullough, among others, following it to the grave. In his will, hurriedly scribbled on a leaf from his pocket-book and attested while on his way to San Francisco, he leaves his savings, about 6,000 dollars, to his mother and sister, who are residing in England; and the singular document has been admitted to probate.

Mr. Boucicault was recently "interviewed" during a rehearsal of *Clarissa* at Wallack's Theatre as to the release of the Fenian prisoner Condon. "Frankly, my dear boy," he said to the reporter, with characteristic affability, "I think that now all the political prisoners are released or dead—the Government having yielded to a feeling they could no longer resist—all questions concerning them are fast dying out." In other words, Mr. Boucicault, having obtained the advertisement he desired, has washed his hands of the matter.

Mr. Joseph Jefferson is not only a consummate actor, but has gifts as a painter and speaker. At the dinner recently given to him and his son-in-law, Mr. Farjeon, at the Lotos Club, he apologised for using technical terms, but asserted that it was an unconscious habit confined to no single profession or calling. He illustrated it by referring to a remark of a railroad conductor, who, after seeing *Rip Van Winkle*, talked with the actor on the train, not on the merit of the "star," but on the construction of the story. He said to Jefferson: "I couldn't see how you were going to get round it when you found Gretchen had *switched* off on to another fellow." On one occasion the manager, who had a talent for making speeches before the curtain, rushed out in grief and distraction to apologise for the absence of the leading man. "Ladies and gentlemen, the fact is, our tragedian's father is dead. Under these circumstances I throw myself on your generosity, faithfully assuring you if you will overlook his fault, that it shall never happen again."

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

IN Mr. H. J. Byron's new play at the Haymarket, which may perhaps be held the most important theatrical production of the month, the author has made an obvious attempt to avoid his besetting sin, and to produce a comedy which shall depend for its success upon foundations more substantial than sparkling dialogue and farcical characterisation. Having first of all provided himself with the materials of a sufficiently strong plot, he has devoted himself resolutely to its development, and has deliberately restrained his comic capabilities whenever and wherever he has believed their exercise to be dangerous. The intention is sufficiently creditable to deserve note, but the result of the experiment is by no means so happy as could be wished. On the whole, it must be said that *Conscience Money* is an eminently unsatisfactory play, for save in isolated passages it is neither interesting nor amusing. Whole scenes of it, indeed, are actually dull—a strange fault for this brightest of dramatic authors to commit—and it is not too much to say that not one of its characters, from first to last, is able to fully secure our sympathy or arouse any lasting curiosity to discover his or her ultimate fate. It is no doubt true that disappointment, when Mr. Byron fails to attain his old level of conversational humour, may have something to do with the unfavourable impression made by *Conscience Money*. The real mistake, however, seems to us to lie much deeper than this. The excellent situation which strikes the key-note of the piece is early frittered away, and is not allowed its legitimate influence upon a plot which actually becomes incoherent before it is brought to its hasty consummation. If we leave out of sight various characters who only provide the story with padding of the most conventional order—characters such as the typical mother-in-law of fiction, the conceited puppy of society, and the cynical but good-hearted bachelor-friend who acts as chorus and guardian angel—if we confine our attention to the people in whose story we ought to be interested, we find the following position illustrated in the first act. A bluff honest gentleman, named Frederick Damer, owner of a handsome house and a good income, has won Miss Helen Calverley, a young lady of no particular character, from his handsome and ill-disposed rival, Sidney Sefton. After his acceptance by Miss Calverley, Mr. Damer learns that his elder brother, long since thought to be dead, is alive, but dare not claim his name and inheritance because a warrant is out against him for a murder committed in Australia. Damer dares not refuse his brother's entreaty that his secret may be kept, and that conscience money may be paid to him to keep him alive out of the income which is his in the eyes of the law. Here, therefore, the problem of the hero's course of conduct is

delicate and suggestive of interest. But when we meet him in the second act the sequence of motive is lost, or is at best but clumsily managed. Led away by his old rival, Sefton, Frederick Damer has taken to gambling, a vice which is, he says, in the blood of the family. He neglects his wife, and his home—which is in London, since he cannot bring himself to live at the country seat to which he has no legal claim—is an unhappy one. But there seems to be no good reason why this should be the result of Damer's secret, which is locked in his own breast till he voluntarily tells it to his useful friend Dick Simpson, whom Mrs. Damer has, with a lack of womanly pride unusual in young wives, commissioned to discover the reason of her husband's misconduct. The secret thus confessed is overheard by the scoundrel Sefton, and is blurted out by him in the course of a quarrel which ensues upon Damer's discovery of his false friend's real character. The crisis of the story is thus produced, and its strongest situation reached, but inasmuch as the misery of the Damers cannot well be increased the relative importance of the revelation is not very great. The third act is, as is not unusual with Mr. Byron, far weaker than its predecessors. The Damers are poor, hard-working, and happy, and a new plot is started in another preposterous attempt made by Mr. Sefton, who has been long since discredited both by husband and wife, to bring about their ruin. Then some complicated discoveries explain that it was not the elder Damer but Sefton who committed the murder, that the murdered man lives, and that by hook or by crook a third act must be provided, and the curtain brought down upon a cheerful conclusion. The story does not hang together, and is at best a thing of shreds and patches, which disappoint even those who are least exacting in the standard which they expect the comedy of the day to reach. The best acting in the representation of the new piece is perhaps displayed by Mr. Terriss, as Sefton, who is fortunate above Miss Pateman and Mr. Charles Kelly in having allotted to him a scene or two in which there is really something to be done. It may, however, be questioned whether there is not a needless amount of melodramatic noise in the vigorous young actor's treatment of a situation which would be equally effective if illustrated with the more subdued intensity characteristic of the defeated plotter's revenge. Mr. Byron delivers the wise and witty sayings of the amicable chorus, Dick Simpson, with the smooth point which has marked his rendering of many similar characters; and Mr. David Fisher, jun., again displays skill in eccentric comedy. On the whole, having regard to the company engaged and the ascertained powers of the dramatist, *Conscience Money* can only be regarded as an opportunity wasted.

The chief feeling aroused by a visit to *Marie, the Pearl of Savoy*, at the Court Theatre, is one of surprise that it can be worth the while of a manager like Mr. John Hare to peril the hardly-won reputation of his theatre by allowing so feeble an exhibition to take place on his stage. Miss Agnes Leonard is the lady who plays the heroine of this version of the French play, *La Grace de Dieu*, on which *Linda de Chamounix* was founded; and she has a

great deal to learn before she could be competent to take so prominent a position. The drama is not by any means well chosen for its purpose, which seems to be the introduction of Miss Leonard in a leading rôle; but whatever may be its faults, it was seen here to great disadvantage, and was scarcely recognisable as a work which in one form or another has achieved genuine popularity. Many of its most serious passages became actually ludicrous, especially when the performers burst into snatches of song, dreadfully flat and quite uncalled for by the necessities of the situation. Of the capabilities of artists such as Mr. W. H. Stephens and Mrs. Leigh Murray no indication need be given, but they could certainly never have been discovered from this performance. Miss Maria Harris's sprightliness and buoyancy stood her in good stead, and Miss Leonard herself must be credited with intelligent intentions such as may, with time and study, ripen into useful performance. But *Marie, the Pearl of Savoy* and its representation are absurdly unworthy of their place in the theatre which has given us *Olivia*, and the freak of management is to be sincerely regretted.

Of Mr. Burnand's *Jeames* at the Gaiety, with Mr. E. Terry as Thackeray's famous footman, it can only be said that the experiment was killed by Mr. Byron's Chawles, as previously presented at the Globe by Mr. Toole in *A Fool and His Money*. The subject and motive of each play forcibly suggest those of the other. In both an ignorant and vulgar servant comes into a fortune, and is not improved in nature by his good luck; in both capital is made out of the labours of a snob to pose as a gentleman, and in both a happy end is reached only when the footman loses his money and returns to his proper sphere of life. Mr. Burnand, if out of very similar materials he has not made so amusing a play as Mr. Byron's, has faithfully and skilfully dramatised the main incidents of the famous *Jeames's Diary*, but Mr. Terry, in his burlesque of Mr. de la Pluche, is by no means so happy as is Mr. Toole in his parallel creation. The grotesque form is forced, and the undercurrent of vulgar nature is too often left completely out of sight. The outlines of the well-known story of Jeames's treatment of Mary Anne, the housemaid, his dealings with the noble Bareacres family, and his final fall, need not be given here, and it may suffice to note, that with no small portion of the audience the play derives at least as much attraction from its domestic interest, as suggested in the pathetic faithfulness of poor Mary Anne, as from the grotesque farce of Jeames's bearing both before and after his elevation into society. Miss E. Farren here plays very prettily and naturally, and Mr. Royce gives a graphic and clever sketch of old Blodder, the market-gardening uncle of whom poor de la Pluche is so deeply ashamed

At the Globe theatre the opening of the season with the transferred chimes of *Les Cloches de Cornville* was accompanied by the production of a new play called *Mayfair and Ragfair*, from the pen of Mr. Joseph Mackay. The new domestic drama proved to be of little literary or dramatic merit, and dealt with the doings of an old Jew who is both money-lender in the West End and "fence" in Whitechapel. Its plot, which was confused, led up to the refor-

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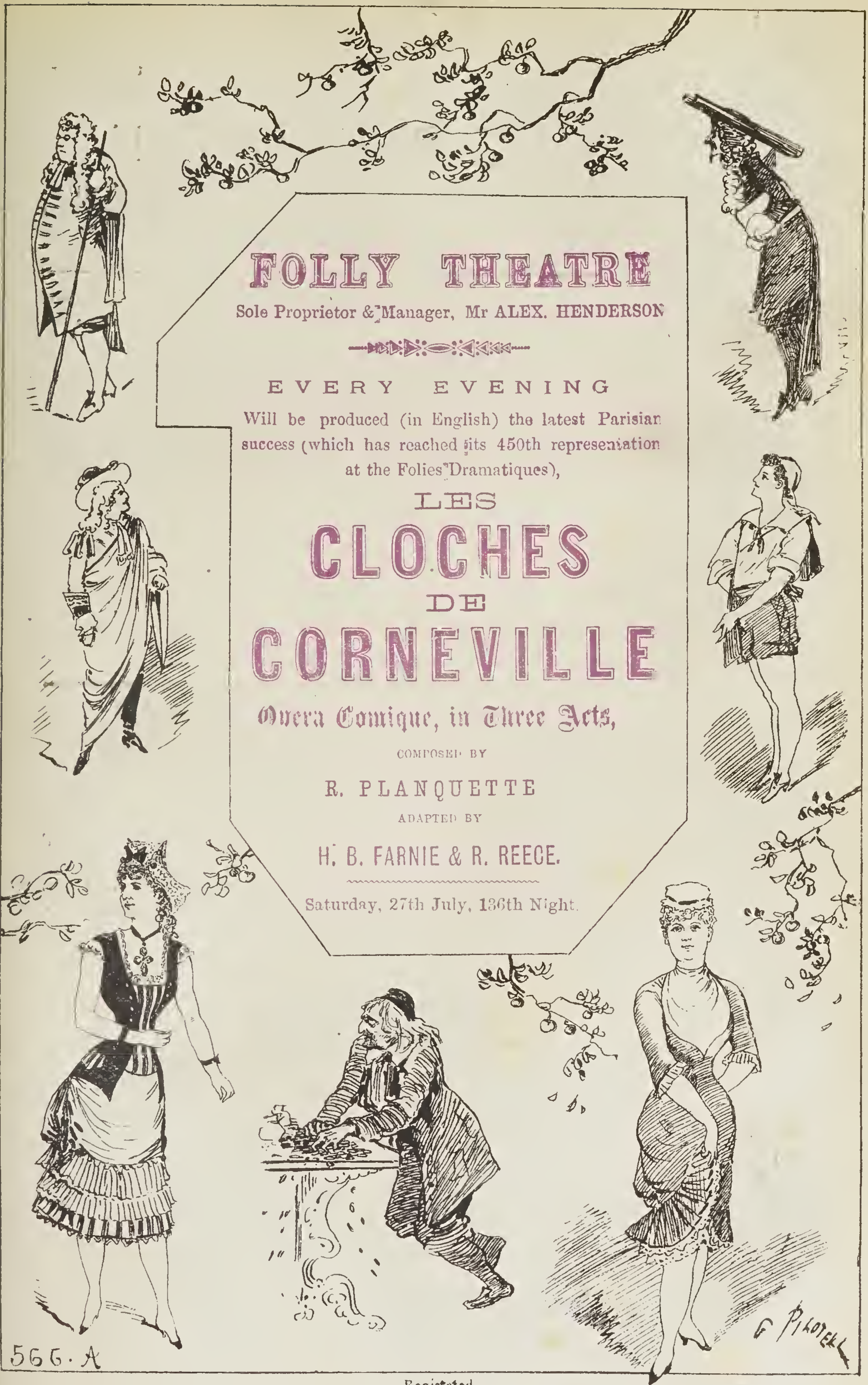

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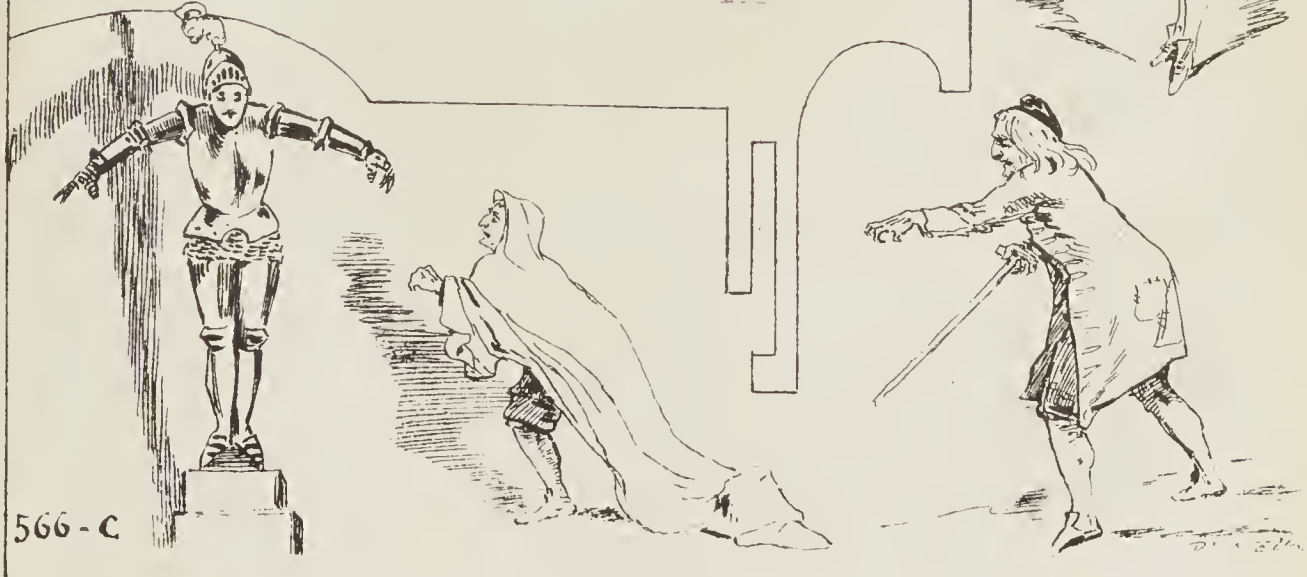

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mation of Emanuel Govia, *alias* Mopus Mo, by the agency of his daughter, and its awkward improbabilities were not redeemed by any great dramatic force of its situations. Mr. James Fernandez played the principal part, but did not succeed in giving lasting success to a piece which scarcely did justice to the inventive powers displayed here and there by its author. *Mayfair and Ragfair* has been succeeded by the clever old Surrey play, *A Bird in the Hand,* in which the young actor Mr. Carton makes a favourable mark, whilst the services of Messrs. Fernandez and Shiel Barry are of their accustomed value.

A MERRY programme has been secured at the Strand theatre by the revival of a couple of pieces in each of which Mr. George Honey, one of the best of our low comedians, takes an important part. He is very amusing as the Ambassador from Below in the bright little musical extravaganza of that name, by Mr. Sutherland Edwardes and the late Mr. Robert Brough; and he is very entertaining as the Major Buncombe of *Love and Money,* a comedy by the late Mr. Andrew Halliday, with which it will be recollected the Vaudeville was opened in 1870 by Messrs. James and Thorne. This latter play, which had too much of the farcical element to do all that was originally expected of it, goes better under its present conditions than it did in days gone by, and Mr. Honey exhibits much genuine humour as an adventurer somewhat after the Micawber pattern. In most other other respects the company at the Strand is at best only respectable.

AT the Duke's theatre, formerly known as the Holborn, and subsequently as the Mirror, an experiment has been made to attract an audience by means of prices much lower than those generally charged at West End houses. To a huge shilling pit is offered a new version of *Les Miserables,* in which M. Hugo would probably recognise only the outline of his famous work, and which, as a literary production, and as a work of dramatic art, is quite unworthy of its original. The play, however, which is called *The Barricade,* has plenty of the pronounced features likely to render it popular with the special class of audience to which it is addressed; and Mr. Clarance Holt, who here combines in his labours the functions of dramatist, actor, and manager, may not impossibly win for his efforts a reward which their artistic merits do not deserve.

BY a couple of curiosities in the way of dramatic production a passing note is demanded. A firm of enterprising Americans has given us at the Princess's a representation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* in which a considerable number of genuine niggers are engaged, whilst at the Gaiety a version of the popular *Helen's Babies* has been presented for the purpose of introducing some miniature performers known as the "Dampier Children." Of these latter it will be enough to say, that in a tedious sketch of an over-praised book they prove themselves to have been carefully, if not always judiciously, trained, and that where Mr. Habberton's adapter does not step in to insert incongruous songs and dances into the dialogue of *Budge and Tottie,* the youthful Dampiers execute their task very efficiently. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* which is played both at the Aquarium theatre

in the morning and at the Princess's at night, the best feature is the marvellous banjo-playing of a Mr. Weston, whilst Mr. Charles Warner and other players of some little mark are quite thrown into the shade by their darker colleagues. Mrs. Beecher Stowe's story, however, appears to be enjoyed even in the form of the variety-entertainment into which it has now been cast.

With a more than usually fatuous burlesque and an adapted French comedy of some little merit the new season at the Folly has commenced. It is probable that the particular taste of the audience catered for will be satisfied with the lavish display of female charms and bright silks and satins, and break-downs and comic songs; but it must be confessed that Miss Lydia Thompson, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Lionel Brough, Mr. Alfred Bishop, and their coadjutors have seldom been supplied with sadder rubbish out of which to make an entertainment. Indeed, to hear Mr. Brough, Miss Thompson, and Mr. Paulton screeching out a laughter-chorus until the noise they make suggests a farm-yard emptied into a drawing-room, to watch them striving to invent comic business as they go on, and labouring over points of dialogue and action that refuse to be made, proves painful even to those who can enjoy a good old-fashioned burlesque such as possesses the wit so plentifully lacking in Messrs. Reece and Farnie's *Stars and Garters.* Unless *L' Etoile* has been cruelly wronged, it is a piece which was certainly not worth adaptation. Upon the new comedy, which also is "taken from the French," the same harsh verdict need by no means be pronounced. The tone in which a widow's tardy discovery of her late husband's unfaithfulness is treated is scarcely pleasant, and the *The Idol* is spun out to limits far beyond any that are needed; but its principal scene is exceedingly clever, being incisive in its double-edged satire, and thoroughly dramatic in its vein of genuine high comedy. Miss Eastlake plays a difficult part with much delicacy and good taste, and, if for her performance alone in the second act, would make *The Idol* well worth seeing. Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Brough, and Mr. Paulton are also in the cast, and are as effective as the somewhat narrow limits of the parts they represent will permit. By judicious compression and revision, we think, the *Idol* might be made a very acceptable play—at least more acceptable than it is at present.

IN THE PROVINCES.

In the second week of September, Mr. Irving, after fulfilling brief engagements at Leicester and Preston, in both of which towns he was warmly applauded by both the public and the press, appeared at Liverpool as Hamlet. "No higher tribute," says the *Albion,* "could be paid to an actor than the demeanour of the large audience at the Alexandra Theatre last night. Everyone hung eagerly upon every word that fell from Hamlet's lips, and from the opening of the play to its close silence reigned supreme except when plaudits rang through the house." "To the genuine student of Shakspere's

236 a.

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Uncle Tom	Mr CHARLES H. MORTON
George Harris	Mr CHARLES WARNER
Lawyer Marks	Mr HARRY HAWK
Phineas Fletcher ...	... Mr HARRY JACKSON
Simon Legree	... Mr J. H. ROWE
Mr St. Clair	... Mr BRENNAND
Senator Bird	Mr Wm. A, ROUSE
Mr Shelby	... Mr RUSSELL
Sam Haley	Mr T. W. THORNE
Auctioneer	... Mr CONWAY
George Shelby (Mr Shelby's Son) ...	... Mr MURRAY
Eliza	Miss DOLORES DRUMMOND
Cassie	Miss EDITH WILSON
Topsy	... Miss MARIE BATES
Eva	Miss CARRIE COOTE
Aunt Ophelia	.. Miss FANNY DENHAM
Emmeline... ...	... Miss FANNY LEE
Marie St. Clair	Miss AGNES HEWITT
Chloe	Mrs W. A ROUSE

Act 1. HAPPY HOME OF UNCLE TOM.

Mr Shelby's Plantation—Sold in Bondage—Tavern on the Banks of the Ohio—Uncle Tom's Cabin—Negro Diversions...George Harris determines to escape to British Soil—Choral Hymns by the JUBILEE SINGERS—the Slave Catchers... Pursuit of Eliza...Grand View of the

OHIO RIVER IN MID-WINTER. ELIZA'S ESCAPE ACROSS THE FLOATING ICE.

Act 2. THE FUGITIVE'S STRUGGLE.

ROCKY PASS & IMMENSE CASCADE OF REAL WATER

Escape of George and Eliza...A Friend in need...The Slave Hunters on the Track... Face to Face...The Fugitive's Struggle for Freedom...The Slaves at Bay and discomfiture of the Hunters.

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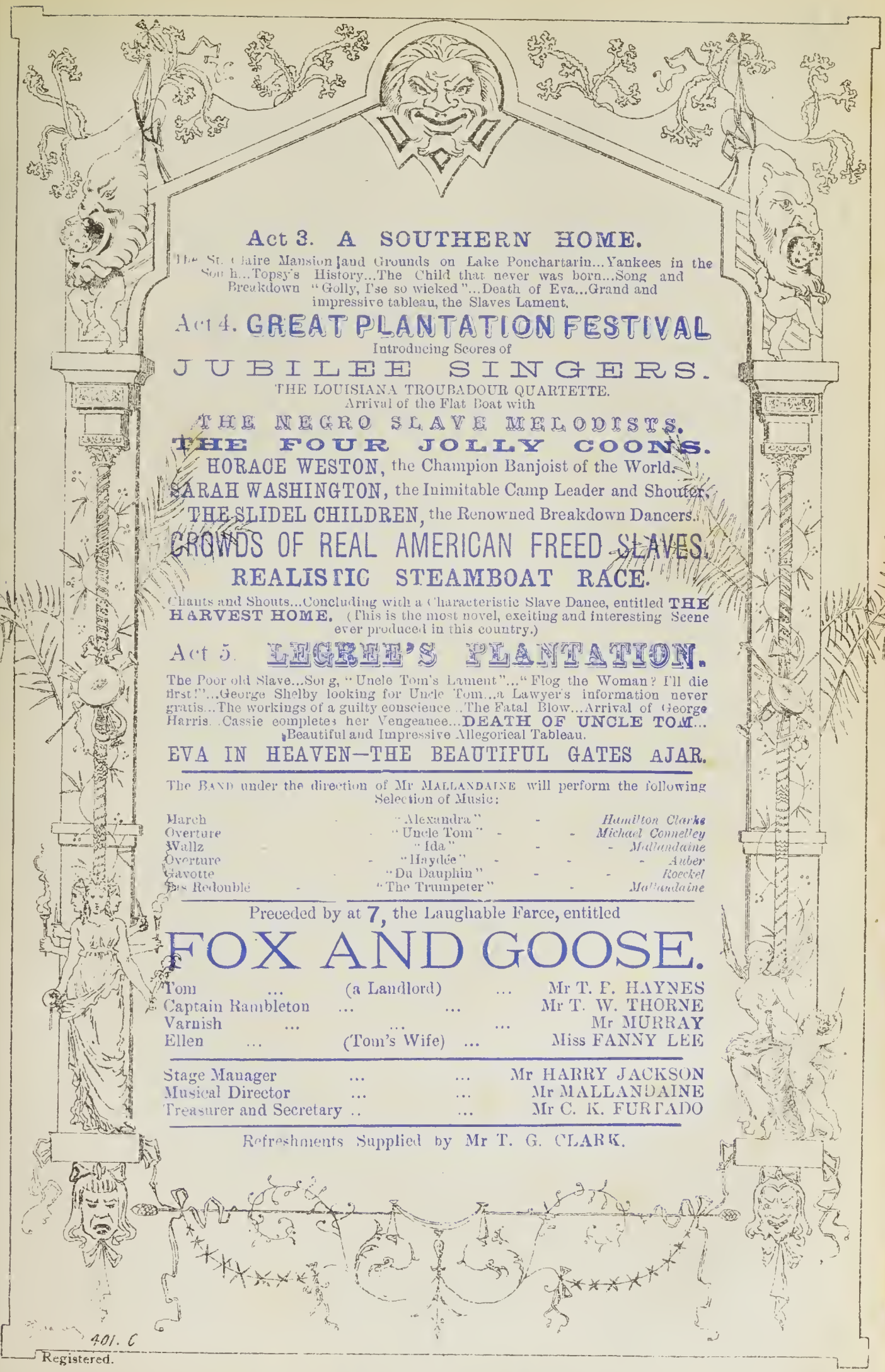

Act 3. A SOUTHERN HOME.

The St. Claire Mansion and Grounds on Lake Ponchartarin...Yankees in the South...Topsy's History...The Child that never was born...Song and Breakdown "Golly, I'se so wicked"...Death of Eva...Grand and impressive tableau, the Slaves Lament.

Act 4. GREAT PLANTATION FESTIVAL

Introducing Scores of

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Arrival of the Flat Boat with

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Chants and Shouts...Concluding with a Characteristic Slave Dance, entitled **THE HARVEST HOME.** (This is the most novel, exciting and interesting Scene ever produced in this country.)

Act 5. LEGREE'S PLANTATION.

The Poor old Slave...Song, "Uncle Tom's Lament"..."Flog the Woman? I'll die first!"...George Shelby looking for Uncle Tom...a Lawyer's information never gratis...The workings of a guilty conscience ..The Fatal Blow...Arrival of George Harris. .Cassie completes her Vengeance...**DEATH OF UNCLE TOM**...Beautiful and Impressive Allegorical Tableau.

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The BAND under the direction of Mr MALLANDAINE will perform the following Selection of Music:

March	"Alexandra"	-	*Hamilton Clarke*
Overture	"Uncle Tom"	-	*Michael Connelley*
Waltz	"Ida"	-	*Mallandaine*
Overture	"Haydée"	-	*Auber*
Gavotte	"Du Dauphin"	-	*Roeckel*
Bis Redoublé	"The Trumpeter"	-	*Mallandaine*

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Captain Rambleton	...	...	Mr T. W. THORNE
Varnish	...	...	Mr MURRAY
Ellen	... (Tom's Wife)	...	Miss FANNY LEE

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Musical Director	...	Mr MALLANDAINE
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meaning," says the *Daily Post*, "Mr. Irving's Hamlet affords in all its parts, and especially in the refined and intellectual connection of its parts—in its silence as well as in its speech—in its previsions as well as its realisations—a degree of instruction and suggestion, a varied stimulus to thought, such as far outweighs in truth and value all mere popular effect. And in addition to all this, it transcends in popular effect, at the point where this is permissible and desirable, every other impersonation with which experience or tradition acquaints us. Mr. Irving, caring little in the main for those prompt successes with an audience, which in *Hamlet* are as easily attainable as they are inappropriate and out of the spirit of the play, seizes the one great opportunity with magnificent power. During the rest of the action he is a rare embodiment of the irresolute, poetical, fate-driven, fascinating frailty of temperament which the great dramatist has with such originality associated with Hamlet's mental vigour. The effect of the play-scene was never greater than last night, and no audience has ever more clamorously confessed the magic of the actor's overwhelming tragic force in executing this sublime conception, which brings the passion of the play within the domain of irresistible reality, without sacrificing—on the contrary, rather heightening—its lofty poetry." The *Courier* remarks that the performance was not less conscientious and brilliant than in former years. Mr. Irving also appeared as Richelieu and Louis XI. The *Albion* tells us that he was warmly applauded; "at times, indeed, as when he drew the circle of the Holy Church around Julie, and threatens the curse of Rome on him who would dare to touch her, the enthusiasm was intense, and it was equally so when, revivified at the name of France in the last scene, he declared that the foes of France should lie where the parchment dispatches did—under his feet. In all the more minute and subtle readings of the part Mr. Irving was in his element, and throughout carried his audience with him. The French aspect of the Cardinal hero is most carefully kept in view by the actor, and this gives the impersonation a freshness and individuality, whilst it is perfectly consistent with the part." "Mr. Irving's idea of the Cardinal," says the *Post*, "is a very complex one, and taxes to the utmost his great powers of illustration. To portray ambition, humour, intensity of resolution, tenderness of heart, and the extremity of forlorn despair, just relieved by the grandly lingering and proudly darting fire of an indomitable nature, through a series of exciting and complicated vicissitudes, is no easy task; and some Richelieus have compounded for deficiency in many aspects by developing very special strength in one or two. This is certainly 'from the purpose' of the play, which was composed, no doubt, under the skilful and suggestive inspiration of Macready, in such a way as to present a constantly quivering series of transitions and contrasts. These Mr. Irving follows with the faultless scent of a mind which no subtlety can elude." Equally warm was the praise lavished upon the actor's Louis XI. "Naturally," the *Post* critic writes, "the first question that will be asked is how the representation compares with that of Charles Kean, which must be vividly remembered by all who saw it. The

answer is, that while as remarkable as Mr. Kean's Louis for the vivid strength and truth of its general conception, Mr. Irving's is more delicately and minutely wrought, and the general features of Louis have with greater care and closeness of observation been associated with a life-like assumption of increasing senility. But besides this it must be recorded that the last act is vastly superior to anything that it entered into the mind of Charles Kean to effect. If there is any point in which the latest English Louis XI. is inferior to the first, it is in the abject pleading to Nemours for life, to which Mr. Kean's peculiar power of rapid and impetuous utterance gave thrilling effect. There is no other point at which Mr. Irving must yield the palm." The *Courier* thinks that Mr. Irving wears the mantle of his predecessor with the strength of manhood and the genius of consummate art; and the *Albion*, though cognizant of the defects of the performance, says that it "stands out boldly as one of the most distinctive achievements in the art of acting that has ever been obtained."

It is hard to believe that such a play as *Dora* was a failure when it was originally produced in London some seven or eight years ago. But the fact remains that it was not successful, owing, it is said, to some mal-arrangement in connection with the mechanical accessories of the piece. Mr. Charles Reade, whose "capable hand," he tells us himself, "moulded the genius of Tennyson into dramatic form," was so disgusted by the failure that he withdrew *Dora* absolutely. He has, however, we are glad to say, repented his determination, and during the engagement of Miss Ellen Terry and Mr. Charles Kelly in Liverpool the play was restored to the stage. "Its value as a work of art," says the *Albion*, "was fully recognised by the large audience present. It may be doubted whether there are two other artists on the English stage who could give such portraits of Allan and Dora as Mr. Kelly and Miss Terry. Every one who sees and hears Mr. Kelly feels the great strength of character and the unbending will of the farmer, Allan, and all are gratified when in the last act he succumbs to the influences of memories which he had hoped he had banished, and ceases to be the 'unforgiving fool' which he had always boasted he was. Mr. Kelly's apparently entirely natural manner cheats people into the belief, which we have heard frequently uttered, that he despises the 'mere artifices' of the stage. On the contrary, his assumptions are the results of the elaboration of every legitimate matter of detail in those 'mere artifices.' Of Miss Terry it is impossible to speak except in terms of the highest praise. In love, in grief, in joy, in hope, and in fear, she is always womanly in the highest degree. The exquisite grace of her demeanour makes the eye follow her unweariedly wherever she goes, and there is not a heart that is not touched by the pathos of her tearful voice." In Manchester the play was received with equal favour.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal appeared successively at Newcastle, Glasgow, and Edinburgh in *Diplomacy*. "Mrs. Kendal," says the *North British Mail*, "contrives to render Dora at once one of the most powerful, as well as one of the chastest of her performances. Setting aside her matchless acting in the greatest scene,

we may specially note that in which she receives Beauclerc's offer of marriage. Her acting here, whilst it sets at defiance all the ordinary stage business with which such situations are usually conducted—at least *on* the stage—is at once as original as it is ingenious and touching. Throughout it ranks as one of those exquisite embodiments in which it is so hard to say whether Art or Nature gains the mastery. Mr. Kendal's Beauclerc will fairly take his warmest admirers by surprise. Regarded, as he usually is, as only an excellent and elegant light comedian, we were scarcely prepared to find in him such artistic pathos as he displayed. Miss Crawford, in the uphill part of the Marquise, played most carefully and acceptably. Miss Kate Pattison played the scheming Countess with effect, although her acting was weak in the last act. Messrs. Teesdale and Elwood were admirable in the ease and nature with which they rendered their respective characters of Henry Beauclerc and Count Orloff. Mr. Mackintosh played Baron Stein. It is a character quite apart from that of either eccentric or low comedy, yet in this most painstaking and rising young actor's hands it suffers little in comparison with those of his accomplished predecessor in the character, Mr. Arthur Cecil." The *Scotsman* says:—"The stormful passage between Dora and her husband found thoroughly adequate interpretation. Very finely did Mrs. Kendal express the wonderment of the innocent girl when suspicion is first hinted, and show this shading into haughty scorn as the fact that her husband misdoubts her is at last realised. Succeeding alternations of anger and tenderness were no less effectively rendered, the actress playing well within her compass even in the last outburst of hysterical despair. Mrs. Kendal's acting in the earlier and quieter scenes was full of those touches which bespeak the consummate artist. Exceedingly subtle was the intermingling of sadness with forced gaiety in the girl's talk with her mother over their unpleasant way of life; and artistic in a high degree the management alike of voice and feature in the love scene, where reserve, adopted as a protection from insult, melts away in a gush of tenderness at the mention of the one word 'wife.'"

Mr. Chippendale, accompanied by his wife, is now on a farewell tour of the provinces. In all quarters his approaching retirement is viewed with sincere regret. He is the last representative of the school of actors who associated their names with the great comedies of the last century. In the words of the *Birmingham Mail*, "he seems to have walked out of the canvas of some portrait of the Johnsonian day, to look and walk and speak as our great grandfathers did. Every look, every gesture denotes the genuine artist; one who has himself a delightful sense of humour, a full appreciation of the subtle delicacies of each phase of character, and who, knowing where power really lies, and being able to successfully employ his knowledge, never descends to insipidity and never exaggerates, but is always delightfully natural, free, and unrestrained. Mrs. Chippendale, during her eighteen years of stage experience, has acquired almost as much popularity as her husband. Most of her impersonations are admirable specimens of histrionic

art, imbued with a refreshing animation, always conscientiously studied, well rounded, and delightfully coloured." At the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Birmingham, the first week of the past month was devoted to a series of six farewell performances by Mr. Chippendale, who has always been an established favourite here, as was testified by the very crowded houses nightly, and by hearty cheering and applause accorded to him almost on each separate entry and exit. The selection of plays naturally included some of those fine old English comedies of which Mr. Chippendale is the best exponent on the stage of to-day, viz., *The Rivals, The Love Chase, She Stoops to Conquer, London Assurance, The School for Scandal,* and *The Poor Gentleman.* The company included Mrs. Chippendale—who is happily *not* included in the farewell—Mrs. Bernard Beere, a fascinating and painstaking actress, new to Birmingham, Mr. F. Everell and others. We must not omit to mention that Mr. James Rodgers, the popular lessee, lent his valuable aid on the occasion of Mr. Chippendale's benefit by appearing as Charles Surface. Then came the London Court Theatre company, under the leadership of Mr. Charles Calvert, for a too brief season of twelve nights, devoted to the presentation of Mr. Wills' *Olivia.* The representation of his beautiful play has been admirable, the leading actors, Miss Florence Terry as Olivia, Mr. Charles Calvert as Vicar Primrose, Mr. T. N. Wenman as Burchell, Mr. Herbert as Squire Thornhill, and the other members of the company have so mastered the characters they represent, that we see before us rather a scene from real life than a stage drama. Numerous as have been the previous successes of Mr. Calvert, we remember none which will outweigh his Vicar of Wakefield. On the 23rd ultimo this theatre was occupied by Mr. Burnett's company, Miss Jenny Lee as Jo being the bright particular star, and shining with her well-known lustre.

On the 16th Mr. Sothern commenced his provincial tour at Edinburgh, appearing as Lord Dundreary. In the opinion of the *Scotsman,* his performance "was as careful, as finished, and as free from any symptoms of want of interest in his work as though it was his first appearance in the play"; and we are also told that "whenever he was on the stage the whole audience were kept in a mood of continuous laughter." From Edinburgh Mr. Sothern proceeded to Glasgow, where his success as Lord Dundreary was equally conspicuous. All the critics agreed with perfect unanimity that it is impossible to indicate in words the laughable wealth of the character or the infinite charm of the actor's workmanship. "Many of the audience," says the *Herald,* "must have made the acquaintance of Lord Dundreary long ago, yet their interest in his peculiarities seemed as fresh as ever. Mr. Sothern's cunning in creating the man is superb. He makes a strong likeness in the very unlikeness of the aristocrat to other men around him. In fact, it is impossible not to like him with all his perfect imperfections—his art, his humour, his droll egotism, and his artlessly artful method of making dialogue that sends the house into fits." As to Mr. Toole, we must positively decline the task of chronicling the movements of an actor who appears in nearly half a dozen

parts of the kingdom in a week. Miss Bateman appeared at Bristol as Leah and Mary Warner, and was cordially received.

IN PARIS.

The prosperity which the Vaudeville has enjoyed since the appearance of *Le Procès Veauradieux* will not be interrupted by the three-act comedy just produced there. We refer to *Le Mari d'Ida,* by M. Delacour and M. Mancel. The plot of the new piece need not detain us long. The husband of Ida is a wealthy perfumer retired from business. He is deeply attached to his wife, who, however, comes to reciprocate the passion which a certain Comte de Saint-Iman has conceived for her, and who is so lost to any sense of decency as to bring her lover to her husband's house. The count has not been there very long when he wishes himself far away. The petty details of the conjugal existence of his host and hostess excite his jealousy: the cordiality with which he is welcomed by the man whom he is about to wrong seems to arouse him to a full perception of the dishonourable nature of his position. In the end, his better impulses having gained the mastery over his passion, he goes away, determined to seek refuge from temptation by marrying a cousin. Madame Colas, as was to be expected, surreptitiously goes to his house and reproaches him with the utmost bitterness, but fails to shake his resolution. M. Colas is in the habit of "dropping in every now and then to see his dear friend Saint-Iman;" and it need hardly be added that in the midst of the very painful interview between Madame Colas and the Count, he is heard coming up the stairs. The lady hurriedly conceals herself, and the suspicions engendered in the mind of M. Colas by one or two trifling circumstances are skilfully dissipated. The piece terminates with the marriage of Saint-Iman and his cousin, and with a determination on the part of Madame Colas to make amends for the past. *Le Mari d'Ida* can scarcely be said to have a highly moral plot, but as the lesson it inculcates is in harmony with the seventh commandment it is at any rate less objectionable than the majority of the pieces presented in the theatres of Paris. In regard to the merits of the play itself, the interest of the audience is well sustained, and the dialogue is polished, terse, and sparkling. The acting was uniformly good. M. Delannoy, as the credulous and somewhat vulgar tradesman, and M. Dieudonné, as the high-bred Comte, are seen to considerable advantage; and the only fault to be found with Mdlle. Réjane's Ida is that she looked a little too girlish for the character. In the cousin, Berthe, we have Mdlle. Gody, a youthful prizetaker at the Conservatoire. The Odéon has been playing Corneille's *Rodogune,* with Mdlle. Marie Laurent as Cléopâtre. This tragedy, originally brought out in 1646, was regarded by the author as at least equal to *Cinna,* and is undoubtedly a splendid monument of his genius. Madame Laurent's appearance is not queenly enough for the part she represents, but in all the passionate scenes she had the audience with her. The lever du rideau, *Une Mission Delicate,* by M. Adenis does

not call for notice. The Bouffes has re-opened with a three-act opéra-bouffe called *Le Pont d'Avignon*, the libretto by M. Liorat, the music by M. Grisart. The plot is not such as can well be described in an English periodical, nor is its nastiness redeemed by any special charm in the music or the language. On this occasion Mdlle. Alice Lody appeared for the first time in opera-bouffe, and her success was not so marked as to exclude the hope that before long she will return to those walks of the drama in which she has hitherto played with so much effect. The revival at the Gymnase of *Frou-Frou*, owing to the failure of Mdlle. Legault to make the world forget the Gilberte of Mdlle. Desclée, has not answered the manager's expectations.

IN BERLIN.

We were mistaken last month when we said that the more fashionable theatres remained closed throughout the month of August, for the Residenz Theater re-opened its doors about the middle of that month, and the Royal Opera and Playhouse began the new season on the 23rd and 24th of August respectively, their example being rapidly followed by all the other theatres, so that by the 1st of September twelve theatres were actively at work. The principal feature of the opening programme of the Residenz Theater was a slight historical piece by Herr Roderich Fels, entitled *Kornblumen*, in which the struggle of the Netherlands against Spain and the religious war in Germany form a fine historical background to the dramatic story of the early life of the Grand Elector of Brandenburg, of his unworthy passion for his cousin Ludovika, and of his conversion by a more ennobling love for the Statdholder's daughter, whom he subsequently married. The same subject was treated some two years ago by Herr Hanns Herrig, in his drama, *Der Kurprinz*. Herr Fels has treated the matter in a rather rhetorical manner, and by introducing loyal allusions to the present emperor succeeds in eliciting much applause for his drama, which is not of high merit. It was followed by German versions of two French farces, *Politische Grundsätze* (M. Goudinet's *Convictions de Papa*), and the *Paragraph* 213 of Messrs. Dennery and Lemoine. The former, smartly played by Herr Keppler, as the deputy, and Fräulein Klinkhammer, as his daughter, met with a deservedly-favourable reception, but the latter failed to amuse the audience. *Kornblumen* introduced two actresses new to Berlin, Fräulein Castelli and Fräulein von Maersch, neither of whom attained any marked success. The opening programme did not long prove attractive, and at the end of August there was substituted for it the Norwegian dramatist, Björnsterne Björnson's powerful drama, *Ein Fallissement* (A Failure), a piece suggested by the great commercial crisis of 1873, and introduced to the German stage three years ago, when its author's masterly castigation of mercantile dishonesty created such a profound sensation, that a well-known German dramatist said of the play: "To it we are indebted for the deepest and most powerful impressions which we have received from the stage for years." The drama has lost little of its effectiveness

since its first production in Germany, and its introduction into the repertory of the Residenz Theater is justified by the presence in the company of Herr Keppler, who gives a very fine impersonation of the Advocate Berent. The dishonest merchant, on the other hand, found a far from satisfactory representative in Herr Patonay. The Norwegian drama, after a few performances, gave place on the 7th ult. to *Die Kammerzofe,* a German version of M. Paul Ferrier's comedy, *La Femme de Chambre,* produced at the Paris Gymnase last summer. In this piece, Herr Keppler again came to the front, and gave striking proof of his versatility by his highly-humorous rendering of M. St. Germain's original part of Montmoreau, the husband who falls a victim to the charms of the "Kammerzofe," as have done the husbands of all her former mistresses. Fräulein Jenny Kafka was a fair representative of the title part, and the new comedy, being played throughout with the indispensable vivacity and lightness of touch, met with a very favourable reception, and seems likely to maintain its place in the bills for some time. It was preceded by a one-act comedy by Herr Emil Claar, entitled *Zu Füssen Dir,* which possessed no merit but that of brevity.

During the first weeks of the season the Royal Opera and Playhouse gave performances for the most part on alternate evenings, and produced no novelties, but relied on the wealth of their repertory. The first ten operas of the season, performed between Aug. 23 and Sept. 10, may be noted to show the variety of the musical fare provided for the frequenters of the Berlin Royal Opera: Brüll's *Goldene Kreuz,* Cherubini's *Wasserträger* (Deux Journées), Wagner's *Lohengrin, Der fliegende Holländer,* and *Tannhäuser,* Auber's *Masaniello,* Beethoven's *Fidelio,* Weber's *Freischütz,* Verdi's *Trovatore,* and Marschner's *Templer und die Jüden* (Ivanhoe). Amongst the improvements made in the house during the vacation, the most noteworthy is the lowering of the orchestra, whereby the singers' voices are no longer drowned, but, on the other hand, the slightest mistakes of intonation are now much more clearly audible than under the old arrangement. The Royal Playhouse opened its season with Moreto's ever-popular *Donna Diana,* and gave a different piece for each of its first ten performances, the works selected being by Schiller, Kleist, Redwitz, Benedix, Scribe, Bayard, Moser, and Paul Lindau.

The Wallner Theater (the Palais Royal of Berlin) opened its season on the last day of August with a new farcical comedy in three acts by Herr W. Mannstädt, entitled *Auf dem Vulkan,* a very feeble and disjointed production, with a tendency to weak sentimentality. The manager, Herr Lebrun, with his mirth-moving associates Herren Engels and Meissner, failed to gain a favourable hearing for the piece, notwithstanding the assistance of the newly engaged Fräulein Schwarz, a soubrette, who may be regarded as a valuable accession to the strength of the company. The new piece soon disappeared from the bills, and on the 8th ult. Herr Gustav von Moser's highly successful comedy, *Der Hypochonder,* was revived, being its 101st performance at this theatre. The National Theater, which has been tastefully renovated during the recess, opened on the 1st ult. under the management of Herr Paul

Borsdorff, who seems to be a disciple of the Meiningen School from the attention which he devoted to *mise en scène* and to stage grouping in the performance of Shakspere's *Merchant of Venice,* with which he opened his season. The difficult character of Shylock was creditably rendered by Herr Wachtel, and Portia found a graceful and humorous representative in Fräulein Wallberg. The high aims of the new management were further evidenced by subsequent performances of Gœthe's *Egmont* and Schiller's *Räuber.*

The Victoria Theater opened its season with *Jean Renaud oder ein Märtyrer,* a German version of Messrs. Dennery & Cormon's *Cause Célèbre,* of which we need not relate the plot, as the English version, entitled *Proof,* now on the London Adelphi bill, will have rendered it familiar to most of our readers. The leading part, which has had so many representatives in London, is here acted by Herr Emil Hahn (the manager of the house) in an able, but unequal manner. Fräulein Gräffner and Kirchhöffer, both new to Berlin, created a very favourable impression as Adrienne and Valentine respectively. Herr Gerlach, as Chamboran, and Herr Jürgensen, as Lazare, also contributed to the success of the piece, which seems likely to prove attractive for some time to come. The Friedrich-Wilhelmstadt Theater, which remained open throughout the summer, produced its first autumn novelty on the 3rd ult., in the shape of a musical piece by Herr C. Pleininger, entitled *Der Goldfisch,* with libretto by Herren Jacobsohn and Wilken. The book proved to be a free version of *Goldene Berge,* a piece familiar to the frequenters of the Wallner Theater, and the music was equally wanting in originality, abounding in reminiscences of Offenbach. Herr M. Schulz's imitation of the style of the Estudiantina Figaro, a company of Spanish vocalists who fulfilled a successful engagement at this house during the latter part of August, was one of the best features of the performance. The Opera season still continues at Kroll's Theater, where many "guests" from various parts of Germany have appeared with more or less success. There have also been some interesting performances at such minor houses as the Ostend and the Belle-Alliance Theaters, which space fails us to record.

IN VIENNA.

The theatrical Long Vacation ended as usual with August, and before the first week of September had passed all the leading theatres, except the Komische Oper, which is soon to re-open under the name of the Ring Theater, had entered upon the labours of the winter season. The Burgtheater (the Comédie Française of Vienna) opened its season on the 1st ult., with a performance of Lessing's *Nathan der Weise,* with Herr Lewinsky in the title character, which he long since made his own. During the first weeks of the season the well-known works of the repertory prove sufficiently attractive to a population long deprived of a favourite kind of entertainment, and accordingly it was not till the 17th ult., that the first novelty of the season was produced in the shape of Herr Paul Lindau's comedy *Johannistrieb,* the principal success of last spring at the

Berlin Royal Playhouse. The performance took place too late for notice in our present number, but we may state that the cast was a strong one, comprising the names of Herren Lewinsky, Sonnenthal, Mitterwurzer, and Gabillon, and Mesdames Janisch, Strassman, and Gabillon. The management have had to engage a young lady to play the young heroines of tragedy during the few months' which will elapse before Fräulein Heese and Wessely will be free to enter upon their duties at the Burgtheater, and to fill this vacancy Fräulein Satran, of the Oldenburg Theatre, has been selected. The young lady made her *début* here on the 8th ult., in the trying part of Gretchen in Goethe's *Faust*, and did not greatly please the rather exacting audience of the leading theatre, though the simplicity of her style saved her from failure, and secured for her considerable applause. Herr Sonnenthal resumed successfully his well-known impersonation of *Faust*, and Herr Baumetster was an effective Valentin, but Herr Mitterwurzer treated Mephistopheles in a more farcical manner than ever, though his representation of the character has always erred in that direction. Amongst the various programmes of the early part of the season—each of the first seventeen nights had its distinct programme—we find but one devoted to Shakspere, whose *Tempest* was tastefully mounted, and well played by Herr Hallenstein as Prospero, Herr Mitterwurzer as Caliban, Fräulein Hohenfels as Ariel, Fräulein Walbeck as Miranda. The great dramatist is not, however, to be neglected during the season, and important revivals of *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra* are in preparation. The manager, Herr Dingelstedt, is busily engaged in preparing an acting version of the latter tragedy, in which the title parts are to be filled by Herr Sonnenthal and Frau Wolter. In the list of promised novelties we find a German version of Lord Lytton's *House of Darnley*, for foreign views of which we shall look with some curiosity; *Der Kronprätendent*, a German version of a drama by the Hungarian dramatist, Szigligetti; *Rosenkranz und Goldenstern*, a comedy sent in anonymously; *Gyges und sein Ring*, a yet unacted tragedy by Hebbel; *Arabella Stuart*, a tragedy by Rudolph Gottschall; *Die Ebestifter*, a comedy by Roderich Anschütz, &c. Goethe's *Torquato Tasso* and *Götz von Berlichingen* and Schiller's *Don Carlos* are to be amongst the most important revivals of a season which promises to be full of interest.

The Stadttheater opened one day earlier than usual, giving on the 31st of August a performance for the benefit of the soldiers wounded in Bosnia. The piece selected for the occasion was P. A. Wolff's somewhat antiquated four-act romantic play, *Preciosa*, which was played well all round. Fräulein Frank displayed considerable power in the title part, and Herr Bassermann represented Don Alonzo with much warmth, while Pedro, the "Schlossvogt," the least antiquated character in the piece, showed the vigorous humour of Herr Tyrolt to great advantage. The accompanying music of Weber was not given in the best manner, but *Preciosa*, nevertheless, proved attractive for several evenings; and, with the exception of three programmes devoted respectively to *Die biedern Landleute* (Sardou's *Nos bons Villageois*), *Ohne Vater und Mutter* (Messrs. Cormon and de Beauplan's *Pierre*), and Moser's *Ultimo*, it main-

tained its place in the bills till the 10th ult., which was marked by an interesting revival of a German version of Madame de Girardin's attractive comedy, *Lady Tartuffe*. Fräulein Schratt represented in her most charming manner the innocence of Jeanne de Clairmont, and Frau Schönfeld acted the Comtesse de Clairmont with her habitual grace and dignity; but Fräulein Weisse was not seen to the best advantage in the rather ungrateful title-rôle. The ladies were well supported by Herr Bukovics as Marshal d'Estigny, Herr Bessermann as Hector de Renneville, Herr Kadelburg as the Baron de Tourbières, and Herr Tyrolt as the gardener. The manager of the Stadtheater conducts his theatre on a principle which excludes long runs, and after four consecutive performances, *Lady Tartuffe* gave place to such pieces of the current repertory as *Durchgebraunt* (M. Hennequin's *Poudre d'Escampette*), Oscar von Redwitz's historical play, *Philippine Welfer*, and the *Demi Monde* of M. Dumas, *fils*. Amongst the pieces announced for production in the latter part of September were Spielhagen's *Hanns und Grethe*, played at the Burgtheater about eight years ago, and Martin Grief's *Marino Falieri*, a yet unacted tragedy. In the first half of the present month (October), Frau Boudins-Wildraudt is to appear at this house in two new pieces by her husband. Herr Wilbrandt. The German version of M. Emile Angier's comedy, *Les Fourchambault*, is not to be produced till next month. The manager of the Stadtheater intends to pay great attention to the classical drama during the present season, and has in preparation an important revival of Goethe's *Iphigenia auf Tauris*, with Fräulein Frank in the title part, Herr Mylins as Orestes, Herr Bassermann as Pylades, and Herr Grève as the King.

It was not till the 7th ult. that the Carl Theater, which has been tastefully renovated during the recess, opened for the first time under the direction of its new manager, Herr Tewele, late the leading comic actor at the Stadtheater. The opening performance was given for the benefit of the families of the mobilised soldiers, and the programme consisted of *Französische Kleinstädter*, a German version of M. Sardou's latest comedy, *Les Bourgeois de Pontarcy*, which was placed upon the stage in a manner that augurs well for the new management, and was received throughout with loud applause. It is unnecessary to relate the plot of this comedy, which was fully described in The Theatre on the occasion of the first production of the piece at the Paris Vandeville, and has since been discussed *apropos* of the performance of Italian versions of it in Rome and Milan. The dramatic scenes are feebler than the purely comic ones illustrative of life in a small French town, and at the Carl Theater the superiority of the latter was rendered doubly evident by the excellence of the acting of the leading comic parts. The Uncle Brochat of Herr Tewele, and the Trabut of Herr Knaack can hardly have been surpassed by the original representatives of those parts in Paris. The serions scenes, though less satisfactory, excited much applause. Herr Wiene, late of the Burgtheater, played the difficult part of Fabrice in a tragic style rather out of keeping with the general tone of the play. Fraulein Mondthal, a new accession to the strength of the com-

pany, was open to the same reproach in her impersonation of Marcele, but her delivery was excellent, and she is evidently an actress of promise. Fraulein Galster was good as the Baroness. On the whole the success was decided, and *Französische Kleinstädter* will not disappear from the repertory after the short number of consecutive performances which constitute a long run in Vienna. On the 23rd ult., Herr Matras was announced to make his *rentrée* as the Pasha Izzet in Suppé's *Fatinitza*, while Fraulein Visca was to make her *début* in the part of Lydia. M. Paul Ferrier's *Femme de Chambre* is soon to be produced under the title of *Die Kammerjungfer*, preceded by a one-act operetta by Johann Brandl, entitled *Die verfallene Mauer*. In the long list of novelties announced for production at the Carl Theater during the present season, we observe a German version of *Our Boys*, entitled *Jung-England;* a new comic opera by Herr von Suppé, with libretto by Herren Zell and Genée, entitled *Boccaccio;* German versions of Dennery and Cormon's *Cause Célèbre*, Hennequin's *Niniche*, Lecocq's *Petit Duc* and *La Marjolaine*, Dumas's *Visite de Noce*, Belot's *Article* 47, Meilhac and Halévy's yet unacted comedy, *La Petite Mère*, Hennequin and Delacour's *Cherchez la Femme*, not yet produced in Paris, and many other translations from the French.

The Theater an der Wien opened on the 30th of August, with a new and original spectacular piece, in ten tableaux, by Herr M. K. Kautsky, bearing the English title, *Atlantic-Pacific Company*. The piece was an extravagant imitation of Jules Verne's *Tour du Monde*, admirably mounted, and well acted by a competent company. It maintained its place in the bills till the 17th ult., when it was supplanted by a German version of M. Planquette's successful *Cloches de Corneville*.

Space fails us to speak of the performances at the Imperial Opera, which opened for the season on the 17th of August with Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*, and has since given a vast number of operas, comprising several of Wagner's. One of the most noteworthy events of the early part of the season was a revival of Mehul's Biblical opera, *Joseph and his Brethren*, in which Herr Beck's masterly rendering of the part of Simeon created a sensation.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

So infrequent are the musical entertainments in Rome during the midsummer months that the performances of the Neapolitan opera-bouffa company at the Manzoni Theatre attracted good audiences throughout the month of August in spite of the uncentral situation of the house. The *Campana dell' Eremitaggio* of Signor Sarria, the approaching production of which we announced last month, was well received by a large audience and was repeated several times. Unfortunately its liberetto is almost identical with that of Maillart's well-known opera, *Les Dragons de Villars*, and though the music is clear and spontaneous, it lacks originality and must be

pronounced inferior to that of the French composer. As the critic of the *Opinione* observes, the adoption of a subject already set to music by another composer is a dangerous experiment, only to be justified by success. Rossini's *Barbiere* completely cast into the shade Paisiello's opera on the same subject. Donizetti's *Elisir d'Amore* was sufficiently successful to justify his adoption of a theme which Auber had already treated in his *Philtre,* but the same Italian composer's *Bettly,* the libretto of which was a mere translation of that of Adam's *Châlet,* was a miserable failure. Signor Sarria's new opera is a semi-serious work, and the composer is happier in the treatment of purely comic, not to say farcial themes; the *Campana dell' Eremitaggio* contains many pleasing numbers, but nothing that approaches in excellence the best things in the same composer's *Babbeo e l'Intrigante,* a pure opera-bouffa, in the interpretation of which the company now at the Manzoni Theatre were moreover more at home than in the more dramatic music of the new work.

The Politeama Romano brought a very unfortunate summer season to a close towards the end of August with the production of a new opera in four acts by Signor Sebastiani, entitled *Rafaello e la Fornarina,* the performance of which was unhappily interrupted in the middle by an indisposition of the tenor, Signor Palermi, who, indeed, had not been in full possession of his powers during the earlier part of the evening. The concluding acts were given with the exception of the pieces in which the tenor should have taken part. The finest opera ever composed could hardly have produced a deep impression under such circumstances, and Signor Sebastiani's music, written apparently in imitation of Verdi's second manner, did not deeply impress the audience. The libretto, which proceeds from the composer's own pen, is a feeble production, the story of Raffael's love of the Fornarina affording but scant material for a four-act drama, and the author's frequent contempt for the rules of prosody rendering his verse far from pleasing to the ear. From such fiascos the Roman opera-goer turns away sorrowfully, but his hopes are raised by the publication of the programme for the coming season at the Apollo Theatre, for which Signor Jacovacci has engaged a strong company, in which we find, amongst others, the well-known names of Madame Singer (soprano), Tremelli (contralto), whose recent success in London has secured for her some excellent engagements, Stagno (tenor), and Medica (baritone). The operas promised are the *Africana, Norma, Gli Ugonotti, Aïda,* and a fifth opera new to Rome, which has not yet been selected, the management awaiting the result of production of M. Gounod's *Polyeucte* in Paris. The *Hamlet* of M. Ambroise Thomas has not yet been heard in Rome, and would be welcome, though the sentiment of nationality would be better gratified by the production of Signor Marchetti's new opera. Among the ballets of the coming season there is promised one composed by Signora Boschetti, who is to sustain the principal part in it.

The theatres of Milan have not yet fully awakened from the long sleep of summer. The Commenda and Fossati Theatres have given some dramatic performances of little interest, and the Dal Verme

Theatre has been giving a series of performances of Verdi's *Masnadieri* and of Apolloni's *Ebreo,* but they were not of a nature to merit notice, the company engaged being one of but slight pretensions. It is said that some singers of repute have been secured for the autumn season, during which a new opera, entitled *Matelda,* by a young composer named Scoutrino, with libretto by the well-known dramatist, Signor Marenco is to be produced.

IN NEW YORK.

By the second week in September several theatres had re-opened their doors, and the revival of commercial activity encourages us to think that where success is deserved, the season of 1878-9 will be far more prosperous than its predecessor. The Grand Opera House has brought the *Danites,* with Mr. McKee Rankin and his wife in the principal parts. The Fifth Avenue Theatre, now under the management of Mr. Fiske and Mr. Harkins, commenced its campaign with a performance of *Ingomar,* in which Miss Mary Anderson played Parthenia and Mr. Mordant the hero. The Park opened on the 1st, the *pièce de resistance* being Mr. Bronson Howard's *Hurricanes,* produced at Chicago last season. The story, evidently suggested by that of the *Pink Dominos,* turns upon a domestic hurricane, occasioned by the absence from home of a young husband with an old husband and two young men at a masquerade ball. The mother-in-law arrives and warns her daughter that business in New York is not just the thing for young husbands, especially when it kept them out all night. The old lady afterwards overhears a conversation between the two unmarried men, in which the adventures of the night are repeated. She tells the wives and the girls, and there is an explosion all round. The four scapegraces invent a great number of lies to smooth matters over, and the confiding ladies are only willing to forgive and forget. Turning to the Union Square Theatre we find Miss Davenport playing there in Mr. Wills's *Olivia.* The piece has not succeeded, partly because the beauty of the writing does not compensate the audience for the comparative absence of incident, and partly because the principal actress is of too masculine voice and demeanour to suggest the gentleness and fragility of the character of the vicar's daughter. Miss Ada Cavendish's *début* at the Broadway Theatre has proved most successful. The character in which she appeared was Mercy Merrick, and the freshness and artistic strength of the impersonation obtained an enthusiastic recognition. Wallack's opened on the 10th with *Clarissa,* which must be pronounced a failure. Mr. Coghlan was ill-placed as Lovelace, and his sister's Clarissa was terribly artificial. The play itself is dramatically weak. Miss Genevieve Ward has appeared at Booth's in *Jane Shore,* which seems likely to remain in the bills for some time.

Echoes from the Green-Room.

The management of the Lyceum Theatre has been transferred by Mrs. Bateman to Mr. Irving, who on the 28th December will commence his eighth season there with *Hamlet*, supported by Miss Ellen Terry as Ophelia. Important revivals are in contemplation, but as yet, we believe, nothing has been decided upon. By engaging so gifted and accomplished an actress as Miss Terry the new manager has begun well, and a further proof that "all-round excellence" is aimed at is to be found in the fact that Mr. Forrester has been added to the company.

Up to the time of writing, by the way, Mr. Irving's provincial tour has been singularly successful, as may be gathered from what we publish in another page. He is now at Dublin, and on the 7th October will appear at Manchester.

Mr. Irving took a benefit on Friday night at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool. "At the termination of my present tour," he said, in the course of an address to the audience, "my professional career in London will enter upon a new period, though without change of scene. When an actor turns manager, it is not with a greedy wish to monopolise either profits or opportunities. I, at least, most earnestly profess that it will be my aim at the Lyceum Theatre, of which I am now manager, to associate upon the stage all the arts and all the talents within my power to subsidise, so as to make the theatre a true school of dramatic art. I cannot myself pretend to be a master of any school; but I can say that most eminent members of my profession have joined me, and will help to make my theatre all I should wish it to be for the benefit of the public from whom I have received so much kindness."

The *Athenæum* states that the widow of the late Mr. Charles J. Mathews has put into the hands of Mr. Charles Dickens abundant material for a life of the comedian. This material includes, for the early life, an autobiography, prepared for publication by Mr. Mathews, together with notes for the continuation of the same, letters, &c. Mr. Dickens intends further to supplement this matter by all the letters and information bearing on the subject that he can collect from other sources.

Madame Patti recently sojourned for a time at Waterton Hall, near Bridgend. Delighted with the district—the Vale of Glamorgan had charms for the songstress which those who have lived in it all their lives never saw—she advertised for a place of residence, and in the result purchased Craig-y-Nos Castle, at Ystradgynlais. The structure commands a delightful view of the Swansea valley and the river winding picturesquely

through it, with the mountains rearing their summits high on either side. The interior is in the old English style, with dark polished heart-of-oak floors.

Mr. Phelps was asked to play Leontes in the Drury-Lane revival of a *Winter's Tale*, but declined because he feared his memory would fail him.

Mr. Charles Reade, the *Liverpool Albion* tells us, is thoroughly at home as an author on a "first night" of a drama. He is indefatigable behind the scenes; he is all smiles, suavity, and benignity before the curtain and from the stage-box. Nay, he is even sentimental in his touching recognition of the tumultuous applause his works command. He was all this when he introduced his adaptation of *Joan* to the Liverpool public.

Madame Ristori, now the Marchesa del Grillo, is about to make the round of Europe, beginning with Paris. In the course of the winter she will appear at Madrid.

King Oscar of Sweden has received an honorary title from the Frankfort Academy of Sciences in consideration of his translation of *Faust* into Swedish verse.

There is no truth in the report that Signor Verdi is writing a new opera called *Montezuma*.

Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt has frequently been seen of late in the captive balloon at the Tuileries. For up to a certain altitude, she says, the higher you go the fresher the air is.

Mrs. Bancroft recently gave a reading at Pontresina in aid of the Paths and Ways Fund, and an elaborate seat, with her name carved thereon, is to be placed at the summit of a new way in remembrance of her kindness.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal return to the Court Theatre next winter.

The following are among the papers which will be read during the ensuing session of the New Shakspere Society:—"The Anachronisms in *Winter's Tale*," by Mr. J. W. Mills, of Clifton; "The Times or Duration of the Action of Shakspere's Plays," by Mr. P. A. Daniel; "The Casket Story in the *Merchant*," by Mr. James Pierce, of Bedford; "Animal *v.* Human Nature in *King Lear*," by the Rev. J. Kirkman; "The Growth of Shakspere as witnessed by the characters of his Fools," by Mr. J. N. Hetherington; "Which is the next greatest of Shakspere's Plays after *Hamlet?*" by the Rev. M. Wynell Mayow.

Mdlle. Minnie Hauk is one of the protégées of Max Maretzek. He sent her to Ernani, paid for her lessons, and patiently waited for what has come—a prima donna.

A Prague newspaper has discovered the meanest of managers. *Faust* was the opera, and he had been "requisitioned" for a penny flower for Marguerite. "Let her use the one she had last night," said this thrifty soul. "She picked it to pieces," said the applicant. "Let her pay for a new one, then; I'll teach her to destroy properties."

Mr. Chatterton, in his future season at Drury Lane Theatre, intends to include operas in English, under the direction of Mr. Carl Meyder. The opening opera will be an adaptation of the German setting of *Katherin and Petruchio*, by the late Hermann Goetz.

Mr. Byron is constructing a new play of materials given to him by Mr. Sothern. It is entitled *Dundreary's Private Theatricals.* It concludes with Dundreary as an amateur Hamlet. Mr. Sothern may open with it in the Park Theatre, New York.

Miss Olive Logan writes to New York from Paris: "Who do you think is playing the Miser Gaspard in *Les Cloches* at the Folies Dramatiques? Why, our old acquaintance Gabel, whose strange voice and odd manner of distorting his mouth made the duet of the gens-d'armes such a hit in New York some years ago. I thought Shiel Barry, in London, played the Miser superbly, but in the wonderful scene of the second act—the ghost-posturing at the window, the clasping and clutching of the gold pieces in insane idolatry, the terror at the clanging of the bells—Gabel's performance threw that of the Irish actor completely into the shade."

Mr. Sydney M. Samuel is writing for Signor Carl Rosa an English version of *Piccolino.* The music is by Edmond Guiraud, the original libretto by M. Victorien Sardou and M. Nuittier. The piece will be produced as an English opera at Her Majesty's next February.

Mr. Farren, while crossing the sands at Boulogne a few days ago, met with a serious accident. He struck his head against the shaft of a bathing machine, and for a time was rendered insensible. He has now recovered.

Jeames is to be followed at the Gaiety by a new comedy from the pen of Mr. Byron.

In order to obtain some local colouring for the drama which he is writing in conjunction with Mr. Albery for the Princess's Theatre, Mr. Hatton passed some days in Normandy in the beginning of August.

Miss Litton will appear at the Aquarium Theatre in November in a new comedy by Mr. Burnand.

Mr. Charles Wyndham has returned to London without meeting with any accident whatever.

It is understood that a new comic opera by Mr. Cellier, the libretto from the pen of Mr. Burnand, will shortly be produced at the Opera Comique.

Mr. Albery is preparing a Christmas piece for the Alhambra.

An essay on *The Music of the Ancients*, commencing "Dim emanation of inchoate thought, immortal in perennial evanescence," has been submitted to the editor of the *Musical World*, but declined with thanks.

Mr. Carl Rosa will have a winter season of English opera at Her Majesty's Theatre, during which Mr. Hersee's version of *Carmen* will be produced.

Mr. Beaumont has rejoined the Lyceum company on tour.

The Strand company have returned to London.

A comedietta by Mr. Arthur Matthison has been accepted at the Royalty Theatre. The author's address is now 4, Park-lane, W.

Mr. Paul Meritt has taken unto himself a wife.

The company of the Comedie Française will visit London next June.

The Comédie Française has in rehearsal a drama in one act, by M. Legouvé, entitled *Anne de Kerautré.* It is highly spoken of.

Corneille's *Polyeucte* will be revived at the Théâtre Français when the opera founded upon it by M. Gounod is brought out by M. Halanzier. Mdlle. Dudlay is to play Pauline.

At the Odéon Theatre *Rodogune* will be followed by a new comedy from the pens of M. Davyl and M. Revilion, *M. Chéribois. La Fontaine des Deui-Ménad,* a new comedy by M. d'Hervilly, is also in rehearsal, and a Mdlle. Bergère, the second comedy prize-winner at the Conservatoire, is coming forward in *La Mort Civile.*

The success of the new comedy at the Vaudeville is so great that the promised revival of *Montjoye* is indefinitely postponed.

La Dame aux Camélias is in rehearsal at the Gymnase.

The company at the Renaissance is particularly strong, consisting as it does of Mdlle. Granier, Mdlle. Zulma-Bouffar, Mdlle. Berthe Thibaut, Miss Kate Munroe, Mdlle. Reine, and Mdlle. Dumas-Perretti. The last-mentioned lady and M. Carvalho had been unable to come to terms, otherwise she would have been at his theatre.

The *Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* is to be revived at the Bouffes-Parisiens.

The sum which the Paris theatres and opera-houses had to pay last year towards the relief of the poor, amounted to 2,725,000 fr.

M. Hippolyte Bedeau, the vaudevillist, died last month, aged 53 years. His last piece was *La Dernière Saisie,* brought out last year at the Gymnase.

Pascal Larnazon, the Swiss tenor, has just died in Paris, aged 62.

M. Humbert, the manager of the Brussels Fantaisies Parisiennes, has accepted two novelties by M. Serpette, one by M. Vogel, and one by M. Hervé.

The Swedish composer Lindblad, the instructor of Jenny Lind, is dead.

Bret Harte has arrived at Crefeld, Rhenish Prussia, and assumed his duties as United States Consul at that place.

The management of the Grand Ducal Theatre, Weimar, have declined Herr Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen.*

A new opera, *Das Nordlicht zu Kasan,* by Herr C. Pfeffer, will be produced this winter at the Stadttheater, Leipsic.

Mdlle. Bianca Donadio and Signor Padilla have left Paris to fulfil their engagements at the Italian Opera, St. Petersburg.

Madame Etelka Gerster will sing at the Golden Wedding festivities of the Emperor and Empress of Germany in Berlin next June.

Herr E. Kretzchmer has completed a three-act "Spiel-Oper" called *Der Flüchtling.*

The Frigerio and Lupi buffo opera company now at Madrid are engaged for Havannah.

Hector Belioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* will be performed next year at the Theatre Royal, Hanover.

Herr Ignaz Brull is busy on a new opera, to be entitled *Bianco.*

There will be no Italian opera this year at Oporto.

Mr. Boucicault's dramatisation of Richardson's novel, *Clarissa,* will open Wallack's. Miss Coghlan will be Clarissa, Mr. Coghlan Lovelace. Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Beeket, and Madame Pouisi will also be provided with rôles.

Mr. Joseph Jefferson, says the Denver *Tribune,* having entirely divested himself of the habiliments of Rip Van Winkle and "sworn off" for the summer, is now devoting himself to a season of enjoyment in Colorado. He has just returned from the southern part of the State, accompanied by his family.

Mr. Charles Reade has converted his *Griffith Gaunt* into a play for Miss Rose Eytinge.

Miss Linda Dietz, it is understood, will shortly marry Mr. W. Stewart, the dramatic critic of the New York *Graphic.*

Miss Fanny Davenport celebrated her thirty-fifth birthday in Baltimore, July 10th. She was the recipient of many congratulatory epistles, and, adds one paper, "some touching stanzas from Augustin Daly."

The veteran theatrical manager, William Niblo, died on the 21st of August, at his residence in Twenty-fourth-street, New York. He had attained a green old age.

In the States a little piece called *A Heart Twice Won* is talked of. Presumably it is in two acts, as twice one is two.

Miss Jeffreys-Lewis, who was in the *Diplomacy* company at San Francisco when Mr. Montague died, has espoused Mr. Maitland, a stock-broker, and retired from the stage.

Early in July Mr. Creswick appeared, for the first time at Adelaide, as Hamlet. "Regarded from a broad point of view," says the *South Australian Advertiser,* "we must pronounce his a masterly performance, although it is no more a perfect one than the Hamlet of Kean, Montgomery, Melville, or Fechter. It approaches more closely to the Frenchman's style than to that of either of the other performers named, because it is more melodramatic in action, and relies more for effect upon the striking passages in the principal scenes than upon the reasoning out of the physiological question involved in the dialogue."

Mr. George Rignold has gone to New South Wales, and will thence, in all probability, come direct to England.

The Theatre.

NOVEMBER 1, 1878.

The Watch-Tower.

THE CHURCH CONGRESS ON THE DRAMA.

TO onlookers who whether clergymen or laymen have no very great faith in practical work by Church Congresses, it must have been both amusing and instructive to note that the discussion which aroused most interest at the Sheffield Congress the other day concerned the Stage. Other subjects were all very well in their way, and each had in its turn to be talked over by the assembly of respectable church dignitaries who had met for the express purpose of enjoying a good gossip. But it must be confessed that a large proportion of these subjects might certainly be described, in the words of the newspaper-reporter whose space is filled, as being "of no public interest;" and indeed it may be doubted whether they were of any private interest, except in so far as they provided an excuse for a much-needed holiday-excursion on the part of country vicars and rectors, who are conscious that the great lack of their lives is the absence of the society of their intellectual equals. It is always pleasant to the man who takes any interest in his profession to meet men who follow the same calling as his own, and to talk what may without irreverence be termed "shop," since no other expression conveys so accurately that species of technical chat which, when dignified by a formal motive, becomes a congress. But it was undeniably noticeable at Sheffield that none of the public conversations entered into by the assembled clergymen were sustained with such apparent relish as was the case with that provoked by the Rev. Charles Bullock's paper on "The Attitude of the

Church to Literature and Education," which included a very prominent reference to the theatre and the music-hall. The fact that this subject should have been touched upon at all is significant of the times. It is not so long ago since English ecclesiastics in congress would about as soon have thought of debating the moral influence of dramatic performances as of deliberating upon the advisability of encouraging weight-for-age races, or the tendency of modern astrology as represented by the fortune-telling of witches who predict the future for housemaids and cooks. The Drama, when removed from the study to the stage, was held to be a sink of degradation: no earnest-minded man and no pure-minded woman could possibly countenance its representation; and it was superstitiously held to be the mainspring of some of the worst vices with which our generation is cursed. Now, however, the time is completely changed. It is admitted, grudgingly perhaps, but still openly, that the acted drama has moral potentialities, that it is not necessarily altogether impure, and that a theatre-lover may indulge his taste without backsliding beyond all hope of recovery. So the matter can be talked of by the clergymen in council without scandal, even though it be known that the reporters are in the room, and that the speakers' opinions concerning actors and actresses will ere long be published to the world at large. It may of course be that with some of the disputants there is still lacking the courage to deliver *ex cathedrâ* the views about playgoing which would be expressed across the walnuts and the wine to the son who was known to have indulged in a stall at the Prince of Wales's, or the wife who, in the course of her annual visit to town, was wont to accept a seat in an opera-box whenever she could get it. Still, with all allowances made, it is much to have the subject treated on an occasion like this with such comparative fairness; and many of the views authoritatively expressed at the Sheffield Congress concerning the relationship of Church to Stage, mark something very like a new departure which is sure to lead before long to very important results, so far, at any rate, as the attitude of professedly religious people towards the theatre is concerned.

From a practical point of view the suggestions made at the Congress towards the reform of the stage do not amount to very much. The discussion commenced with the orthodox attack upon the theatre, made after what used to be considered the orthodox fashion by a clergyman who is orthodox in his ignorant narrow-mindedness if in nothing else. His deductions were based upon the premises supplied by a plentiful lack of actual acquaintance with that which he thought it his duty to denounce, and his arguments were in consequence of a kind which could scarcely address

themselves with effect to those whom they must have been intended to convince. The presumable object of the attack was to warn playgoers and the encouragers of playgoers of the dangers which they are incurring; but as *ex hypothesi* these playgoers knew something of what really goes on at average theatres, and as the reverend teacher obviously did not, his advice would be taken for what it was worth, and would thus prove to be of the cheap and useless order. In days gone by the discussion, could it have taken place at all, would have continued in much the same strain to the bitter end. Ignorant prejudice would have echoed back the words of prejudiced ignorance, and successive speakers would have vied with one another in the vigour of the abuse which they lavished upon the amusement best beloved by half the civilized world. But no sooner was the bovine paper concluded than the note of intelligent opposition was sounded. One clergyman timidly pointed out that after all our dramatic taste was only a harmless variety of that poetic sentiment which exists in most minds, and which we could not afford to stamp out if we would. Another admitted that it was reckless and wasteful to neglect the efficacy of the stage as a moral teacher of the people. It was generously conceded that as a matter of fact impurity was not a necessary element of stage performances, that recreation at the theatre might be perfectly innocent, at any rate so far as the audience was concerned, and that not a few of our popular pieces might be enjoyed without injurious effect by man, woman, or child. Of course, these rational and tolerant thinkers were not allowed to have it all their own way, and the old weapons of offence were clung to with a persistency worthy of a better cause. The well-meant and time-honoured story of the embezzling clerk who saw the *Ticket-of-Leave Man* and was induced by it to restore his plunder, was answered by the dogmatic utterances of a parson who, being convinced that theatres do an immense amount of mischief, seriously announced that unless they were abandoned Christ must be lost. The formulation of this bold and dogmatic opinion may be regarded as the culminating point of the argument, save the mark, employed on the one side, whilst on the other the chief defence raised was that made by the Bishop of Manchester. Dr. Fraser has a reputation for sound common sense, and this reputation adds double weight to any opinion upon the subject of the hour which he may care to express, since he is listened to by many who are not accustomed to look to the Lords Spiritual for useful practical guidance in the concerns of their every-day life. The bishop may, upon the whole, be said not to have belied the estimation in which he is held. He has at least the courage of his convictions, and is not to be scared away by the red rags in which

conventional prejudice is clothed. The theory of the necessity of choosing between abandonment of the theatre and loss of Christ he could not accept at all: in fact, he scouted it as decisively as politeness would allow. The sense of fairness, too, which is one of his most marked characteristics would not permit him to throw the whole blame of the productions of which he cannot but disapprove upon the shoulders of the managers immediately responsible for introducing him. He saw that the fault was, in the first instance, that of the public taste which creates the demand, and not that of the players who provide the supply; and he said in so many words, that clergymen are in the habit of patronizing the very things which in their more unctuous and professional moments they condemn so loudly. "I am afraid," said he, greatly, no doubt, to the annoyance of many of his hearers, "that there will be many a clergyman who would denounce the theatre loudly who yet does not possess sufficient influence over his own household to prevent his wife and his sons and his daughters from visiting dramatic entertainments." And the Bishop went on still more boldly to declare that the attitude of Church towards Stage is too often unjust as well as irrational, and his striking words are well worthy of quotation: "I say that you have no right to declaim against the theatre till you have by some definite act of your own tried to amend it. I do not believe that actors or playwriters wish to corrupt the age; but they are obliged, by the very necessities of their position, to conform more or less to the demands of the age. It is you who demand, and they who meet that demand with the supply. And therefore I would just say this: we have perhaps this morning been treating this disease, if it be a disease, too much as if it were functional. It is not functional, but it is organic. It does seem to me, my friends, that to you, the womanhood amongst us, belongs this great task of purifying the theatre. But I don't believe that the theatre ever will be purified till society has been worthily elevated." These are thoroughly honest and sensible words, and the impression which, coming from such a source they naturally made, only increases our regret that another portion of Dr. Fraser's speech took a hue which we conceive to be unworthy and unwise. The Bishop of Manchester has, we know, done good work in his time, and probably never did better than when he held out the hand of sympathy to actors and actresses. But there is surely a needlessly apologetic tone in such anecdotes as that of the stage-manager who said, "You have spoken to us kindly, and if more clergymen would speak to us poor players kindly and think of us a little better, as you do, perhaps we should do better than we do." And we do not quite care for the defence of the *première danseuse*, to whom a London clergy-

man administered "a few grains of comfort," and whom he found to be leading a respectable and self-sacrificing life. In all this apology there surely works the taint of the old animosity; it is held a wonderful thing for a stage-manager to care to listen to Christian exhortation, or for a ballet-girl in her private life to do her duty as a true woman. An opportunity is moreover given by this well-meant deprecation for the sneers of those who argue that this species of defence of stage-players would be equally applicable to billiard-markers or book-makers; and might be made to prove that because the individual billiard-marker or book-maker is a model of domestic virtue and possibly even a church-goer, his profession is a worthy one. The *reductio ad absurdum* is tempting, and it seems a pity that it should be suggested.

The course that, according to the ablest of the speakers on the occasion when the drama was discussed at the Congress, should be adopted by those who have at heart what they consider the reformation of the stage was curiously illustrated by the advice which he mentioned having given to a lady who complained that the pantomime was rendered unfit for her and her children by the introduction of a ballet. The squeamish lady was recommended to influence her friends and persuade them to influence *their* friends to stay away from the pantomime for a week, when the objectionable ballet would be sure to be withdrawn—we presume "by special request." Herein were embodied at once the strength and the weakness of the position taken up by the most judicious members of the Church Congress with regard to the drama. The principle of the influence thus advocated is perfect; its application childish, out of place, and wholly impracticable. The few people who seriously think that a ballet in a pantomime will do any harm to the children seeing are not likely to be of the calibre able to influence play-goers, play-writers, and play-actors for good. They mean well, and their method of urging their good intentions is by comparison with that of many who have preceded them both kindly and rational. But there are not wanting signs that for the present the task which they have undertaken is almost entirely beyond their powers, and that they have no comprehensive grip of the real signification of the subject with which they attempt to deal.

"A FALSE STEP" TOWARDS DISCREDITING THE CENSORSHIP.

IT is inevitable that an institution like that of our English censorship, which in its very essence is a compromise of the most truly British character, should periodically be subjected to vio-

lent attacks, both as regards its principle and its practical working. For a time all goes on smoothly at the Lord Chamberlain's office, just as it would in any other Government department. Mr. E. F. S. Pigott, who may be regarded as a sort of principal clerk acting under the orders of the Lord Chamberlain for the time being, controls the routine work connected with the skirts of ballet-girls, the chairs in the gangways, the topical allusions of pantomime, and the strange oaths of melodrama satisfactorily enough. The plays which pass the censorship prove to be harmless enough, and those which are prohibited do not come before the notice of the public, since their authors are only meeting the fate which they expected when they made the experiment of attempting to introduce to playgoers something exceptionally hot and strong. Then comes some unhappy occasion when the moralists of the press are horrified to find that Lord Hertford or his subordinates have been caught napping, and that they have not fully appreciated the dramatic effect of some speech or situation or opportunity for effective make-up which they have passed; or else—and this happens more frequently—the author of some accepted work, who loses his pay and his prestige by reason of the fiat of the Examiner of Plays, arraigns that functionary at the bar of public opinion on the charge of inconsistency. All this is natural enough, and especially is it natural that the weak point of the censorship should be considered by those who disapprove of it to lie in its inconsistent operation. To discuss the principle of the censor's decisions would obviously be mere waste of breath. He is the one judge from whom there is no appeal, and who may allow himself to be swayed by the caprice of the moment. He deals moreover with subjects of dispute which are so impalpable as to be almost beyond actual proof either one way or the other. He is a sort of mouthpiece of public opinion, and his chief difficulty lies in determining what tune it is that public opinion wishes him to play. What this difficulty is may be to some small extent best realized by any one who has chanced to discuss in general society the morality of such a play as the *Pink Dominos*, and has striven to convince those who disagree with him either that the piece is or is not fit for representation on a decent stage. If under these circumstances the censorship contrived to make its successive decisions consistent with one another, it would have achieved a very marvellous feat; and the wonder seems to us to be, under the present conditions, not that the Examiner of Plays does not give more satisfaction, but that he is able to perform so much of his work without provoking unfavourable comment.

The latest occasion of attack upon Mr. Pigott has been through Mr. Matthison's version of M. Augier's *Les Lionnes Pauvres*, and an

examination of both original and adaptation leads to the conclusion that the ground is by no means well chosen for a pitched battle. We may at once confess that in our opinion a *False Step*, as Mr. Matthison calls the prohibited play which he has now published, might without danger to the morals of the public have been represented on the stage, more especially as it would probably have had but a short career during which to do any harm. Much in the French play that would certainly have offended English playgoers has been judiciously eliminated or softened down by the translator, but the play would, we think, have been pronounced unequal and unsatisfactory; nor does there seem to us much reason for the opinion of the popular critic to whom Mr. Matthison submitted his work, that *A False Step* is a true dramatic picture of the blacker side of English society of to-day. It would, indeed, be surprising if it were, since *Les Lionnes Pauvres* is not a play even of yesterday in Paris, and the Prendergasts and Duvals of the adaptation seem to us anything but typical Londoners of the present or any other age. The story briefly condensed is that of two married couples whose friendship is of the closest. The husband in the one household is unworthy of his faithful wife; the wife in the other household is unworthy of her husband. An intrigue, rendered all the more repulsive by the terms of intimacy in which the criminals and victims are living, is discovered through some reckless pecuniary transactions on the part of the erring woman which have paved the way for her fall, and the curtain descends upon the injured wife's stern condemnation of the weak husband, who pleads for pardon, and upon the heartbroken husband, who has met with treachery where he had the best right to look for honour. That these characters often talk in sentences which we cannot imagine spoken by English men and women is perhaps only worthy of note when the probable fate of the adaptation is considered; but this fact is, perhaps, to some extent accountable for the difficulty of discovering in *A False Step* an accurate satire upon those ways and customs of our society which in every day life find their natural outcome in the Divorce Court.

The actual dramatic value of *A False Step* has, however, very little to do with the question of the propriety of excluding it from the boards of the London theatres. The point which has to be determined is whether the Examiner of Plays is acting fairly—judging from the light afforded by his previous decisions—in keeping *A False Step* off the stage. To us it seems that he is, and that he would be in the last degree inconsistent if he had allowed *Les Lionnes Pauvres* to be placed upon the stage. M. Augier's play has none of the coarseness which can alone have recommended the dirty stories of *La Marjolaine* and *La Jolie Parfumeuse*, and it has not the equivocal moral which gives its piquancy to *Les Dominos*

Roses. Rather does it follow, *longo intervallo*, the line taken by *Le Supplice d'une Femme*, *Le Demi Monde*, and other really fine plays which urge a lesson of unimpeachable morality in the strongest possible manner. These plays it has been the rule of the Lord Chamberlain's office to condemn. They treat seriously a subject which must only be treated with jocose flippancy: they try to make us cry instead of laugh over marital infidelity, and they deal with adultery as though it were something more than a comic incident of daily life. *A False Step*, therefore, could not have been licensed by Mr. Pigott without stultification of the previous policy of the office; and red-tape precedent is, we know, as important in matters of public morality as in anything else.

The censorship, then, is so far consistent; and, as we have already pointed out, all discussion of the principle, or want of principle, on which it is based would be fruitless. The particular decision concerning which so much fuss has been made is, as a matter of fact, of the very smallest importance compared with the decisions which have gone before it and have in a way governed the case now in question. The dissatisfaction aroused amongst thinking men, when they find that they are forbidden to see the works of Dumas and Sardou, and de Girardin and Augier, by an authority which allows Meilhac and Halévy and Hennequin to be thrust down their throats, will doubtless in time bear fruit; but it will need some freshening breeze stronger than this mere storm in a tea-cup to blow away the abuses and the absurdities of our present system of dramatic censorship.

STAGE ABUSES.

THE cuckoo cry of the social moralists, save the mark! who hold that everything and everybody connected with the stage is necessarily impure, does not now obtain the credit that it did fifty, nay, twenty years ago. There have arisen more liberal-minded instructors of the public, who have realized the fact that no good could come of tabooing the professors of an art which can never lose its wide-spread popularity so long as human nature remains what it is. Friendly recognition and counsel have taken the place of violent abuse, and rational argument has been allowed a voice in the discussion of play-going, stage-players, and stage-plays. The good work which has been done in the past, and can be done in the future, by managers who aim at the elevation of the public taste, or who, at any rate, are anxious to gratify its better phases only, has been admitted on many unaccustomed sides. The proper remedy

of those who are honestly desirous of discouraging the vicious elements of theatrical performances has been discovered to lie, not in wholesale denunciation of the stage and all that belongs to it, but in encouragement of those theatrical entertainments which most nearly approach the ideal standard. It has of late been recognized that if pure-minded, intellectual, and cultured people are dissuaded by their teachers from lending their countenance to any form of dramatic exhibition, this dramatic exhibition will fall lower and lower in obedience to the demands of the only patrons left to it. Similarly it has been felt that if actors and actresses are, through no fault of their own, held to be under a species of social ban, there is comparatively small chance of their remaining worthy to be welcomed within the pale. The reaction, in fact, from the prejudice which dates back a couple of hundred years seems fairly to have set in, and it behoves all those who have at heart the interests of the stage of to-day to express their joy over the change which is so rapidly being accomplished.

But whilst we welcome with earnest satisfaction this new attitude towards the stage, we must guard ourselves against assuming that the stage itself has fully done its share towards justifying its new position. If we could allow the wish to father the thought, we might joyfully announce that all justification for the old charges against the theatre has died out. We might proclaim that there is no longer the slightest foundation for the views of those who honestly believe that no decent woman, with any respect for herself, can adopt the profession of actress; and we might urge that there is absolutely no valid reason for regret of any kind when a girl of unexceptionable character and of bright ability takes it into her head that she will earn her livelihood upon the stage. But although we may be deeply impressed, as indeed we are, with the value of a life devoted to the service of one of the highest of the arts, with the comparative loftiness of its aims and ambitions, with its intelligent interest and its almost unbounded possibilities, it would serve no good purpose to attempt to conceal from ourselves and others that there is a black side to the picture. That there are theatres in London as well as in the provinces conducted behind the scenes as well as in front with the most thorough propriety, we know very well. Such theatres we believed, moreover, to be in a considerable majority, as indeed they ought to be, since demoralizing influence is necessarily inherent to the calling of the actor. But there are also theatres where the company, especially of her own sex, into which the young débutante is thrown, will be of a kind that will inevitably jar upon her sense of womanly self-respect. It is, of course, easy to say that to the

pure all things are pure, but no amount of innocence and worldly unwisdom on the part of the spectator can supply a veil sufficiently thick to keep the impurity of which we speak hidden from view.

As may readily be imagined, we speak here not in the interest of the performers, who have deliberately chosen as the field for their exertions the stage devoted to opera bouffe, and who direct their efforts exclusively towards the entertainments provided for audiences where, in the words of Alfred Austin, "the half-drunk lean over the half-dressed." In the first place it is not probable that the "burlesque lady," whose stock-in-trade consists of shapely limbs, handsome face, false hair, and real jewels, will be at all likely to be shocked by the conversation, the sentiments, and the habits of her colleagues. The "burlesque lady's" skin is thick, albeit fair, and she is not, as a rule, impressionable; and, provided that she has no one to interfere with her in the break-down music-hall song and walk-round, in which the bearing of her aristocratic friends is imitated or caricatured, provided that her bouquets come regularly, and her gorgeous clothes are not outshone by any rival on the stage, her equanimity will not readily be disturbed. The average representation of this form of entertainment calls for little ability on the part of any save one or two leading performers; and the "art," which is, as a rule, the most highly prized, is that of the lady, or of her un-dressmaker, who contrives with the most ingenuity to reconcile the scruples of the Lord Chamberlain with the taste of the stalls. The character, or want of character, of the houses where this unpleasant work is accomplished, is fortunately very well known; and those who, either before or behind the footlights, find themselves shocked by its natural accompaniments have, as a rule, only themselves to thank.

The danger lies in the theatres where the entertainment offered is not wholly of a degraded description, where virtue rubs shoulders with vice, where the good cannot readily be distinguished from the bad, and where the mixture of worthy and unworthy elements depends for its commercial value upon the skill with which superficial analysis of its moral meaning is defied. Suppose, for example, a theatre conducted for the most part after a thoroughly legitimate fashion, with no object in view save the remuneration of its proprietor for the innocent amusement offered to the public. Such a theatre would naturally be popular if its manager chanced to be possessed of shrewd insight into the tastes of playgoers, and to be capable of gauging with accuracy their changes, their intensity, and their duration. Its capacity for harm, therefore, as well as for good could not fail to be large. Its attacks on morality and decency would be of exceptional danger because of their insidiousness. The

false friend would prove worse than the declared enemy. Suppose then, further, that amongst the members of the company at this pleasant and popular theatre there was an actress whose only charm lay in her pretty childish face and in her tender years. Now, if concerning this youthful actress there was a hideous scandal, a scandal rendered all the blacker because of the apparent purity of its object,—if troops of the most depraved patrons of stalls and boxes were attracted to stare at the little victim whom the jaded appetite of the titled voluptuary has sought and found in the nursery, —and if even the most charitably-disposed could not misunderstand the repulsive signification of the brougham and diamonds sported by a burlesque actress receiving two pounds a week, then would it not be clear that a great harm, both direct and indirect, would be done?

The subject is not a pleasant one to treat, and yet it can scarcely be ignored if we are anxious to study how the stage is most surely to maintain what we believe to be its course, upward and onward. We must be prepared to face the obstacles in our path, however disgusting they may be; and we shall do little good by simulating blindness when they are thrust upon our notice. The evil is a notorious one, and cannot but do much to injure the actor's art by indiscriminately injuring the characters of those who follow it. What must be the feelings of an actor worthy the name of man, or of an actress who has not lost the best attributes of womanhood, when they are compelled to associate with colleagues whose wretched vice has not even the grace to conceal itself from the curiosity of the public? How can we expect pure and noble work from artists who, in order to earn their daily bread, are forced to identify themselves and their labours with the unhappiest and most degraded elements of our social economy? How can we feel surprise if those whom we would most willingly see upon our stage are frightened away from all connection with it by the knowledge that they cannot touch pitch and avoid being defiled, at any rate in the estimation of those whose estimation they value most dearly? We may be conscious that a stage career need possess no features which have not an elevating tendency; that there is no reason why the daintiest sensibilities need be shocked by the surroundings of this particular art, any more than by the accompaniments of other arts less attractive and less popular. But the very ground is cut from under the feet of those who are for ever defending the stage against its prejudiced antagonists when they find that, at a theatre of high position, moral enormities of the kind to which we have alluded become a source of profit. When those who should defend the citadel betray it for pur-

poses of personal gain, the work of the enemy is indeed rendered easy.

The remedy for what we have termed a crying scandal is more difficult to urge than to indicate. It lies, in the first instance, with the actors and more particularly with the actresses themselves, who have no sympathy with the colleagues whose presence on the stage is a sham and a sin. In the second place it lies with that large majority amongst playgoers who would be glad to know that the evil of which they are perhaps but dimly conscious was swept away. The former might do much by resolutely declining, even though at some sacrifice to themselves, to work with coadjutors so utterly debased; or where in the hard struggle for existence this attitude is practically impossible, by using all their influence, which in many instances would be great, to prevent by their protests their contamination in this cruel fashion. With the public, or at any rate with that portion of the public which is sincerely anxious for stage reform, the task demands far less self-sacrifice. They have but to make their disgust distinctly felt for its cause to be removed, since the crime which does not pay will speedily be repented of and discontinued.

Portraits.

VII.—MISS MARION TERRY.

THE sisters Terry will undobtedly fill a large space in the annal of the English theatre for the latter half of the nineteenth century. The eldest, Miss Kate Terry, now living in retirement, was an actress of a high order—sympathetic, graceful, and refined. Miss Ellen Terry, as everybody knows, occupies a place in the first rank of her profession, and it may fairly be thought that, great as have been her triumphs during the last four years, she is as yet but on the threshhold of her career. Miss Marion Terry will also enjoy considerable reputation if the promise held forth by her recent essays is realised; and of the youngest member of the family, Miss Florence Terry, who is new to the stage, most gracious things are just now being said by provincial critics. But it is with the third lady that we are immediately concerned on this occasion. About five years ago, it may be remembered, a rearrangement of *Hamlet*, prepared by Mr. Tom Taylor, was brought out at the Crystal Palace, and soon afterwards at various theatres in the country. It has long since been consigned to the shelf, but may be mentioned by future historians of the stage because it served to introduce Miss Marion Terry to the playgoing public. Not yet eighteen years of age, we believe, she came forward as Ophelia, and the manner in which she fulfilled her by no means easy task created a decidedly favourable impression. Her first engagement in London was at the Olympic Theatre, where she remained for one season. Thence she passed to the Strand Theatre, being engaged to support Miss Swanborough in *Old Sailors* and *Weak Woman*. This was in 1874-5, and in the summer and autumn of the latter year we find her playing in *Woodcock's Little Game* and other pieces revived during the theatrical recess. The characters allotted to her were not of great importance, but the advantage of the practice she had became apparent in the ever-increasing ease and brightness of her acting. The rapidity of her progress at length attracted the notice of Mr. Gilbert, who had the courage to entrust the young and comparatively inexperienced actress with the principal part in a play he was then writing. This was *Dan'l Druce*, represented for the first time at the Haymarket Theatre in 1876. Though the cast was exceptionally strong, Miss Terry, by reason of the genuine feeling and charming *naïveté* which characterized her performance of Dorothy, well maintained her place in the foreground of the picture, and contributed in no small measure to the success which the piece

enjoyed. From that time it could not be doubted that an important addition had been made to the list of English actresses. "Miss Marion Terry as Dorothy, the only female character, by the way, in the piece, fairly divides," the *Times* said, "the honours of the stage with Mr. Vezin. In look, voice, and manner she is just such a Dorothy as Mr. Gilbert intended to present, and he should hold himself fortunate in having secured so rare and truthful a copy of his own graceful idea." In the beginning of the following year, when *Pygmalion* was revived, Miss Terry was charged with the onerous task of representing Galatea—onerous not only on account of the trying nature of the part itself, but also because she would have to undergo the ordeal of a comparison with Mrs. Kendal. The young actress was unquestionably at a disadvantage, but it is not too much to say that as the animated statue she confirmed the good impression left upon the minds of the audience by her acting in *Dan'l Druce*. Her next character was the romantic yet shrewd and business-like Belinda in *Engaged*. Thanks to her own keen perception and the teaching of Mr. Gilbert, she entered thoroughly into the whimsical spirit of the part. Her imperturbably serious air, her utter unconsciousness of the incongruity of her speeches and actions, and the perfectly natural limit which she placed on all exaggeration—all this, as we remarked at the time, formed burlesque of the highest and most intelligent kind, the burlesque which may almost be regarded as a fine art. By comparing her Belinda with her Dorothy, we are at once able to see that her powers are not confined to one walk of the drama. Last summer, when Miss Ellen Terry left the Court Theatre for a well-earned rest, her place in Mr. Wills's *Olivia* was taken by Miss Marion Terry—another trying ordeal in the way of comparison for the younger actress, who, however, did not fail to win the suffrages of her audience. At present she is playing at the Olympic in the *Two Orphans*, and before long will appear as Marguerite in Mr. Gilbert's version of *Faust*. As these lines are being written we hear a rumour to the effect that she is going to the Prince of Wales's Theatre. This rumour is credible enough, for the manager of a theatre which claims to be the principal home in London of English comedy may well be anxious to secure her co-operation. Indeed, it can hardly be doubted that Miss Marion Terry will leave a lasting mark upon her time as soon as her evident powers are developed by experience and the requisite opportunities given her. In the course of her public career she has displayed graceful humour, deep sensibility, and considerable intelligence, and the advance she has made in the art of histrionic expression is a proof that she does not shrink from the laborious study without which no real success on the stage can be achieved.

THE THEATRE No. 4 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Yours truly
Marion Terry.

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The Round Table.

PARSONS AND PLAYERS.

By Dutton Cook.

THE Rev. Mr. Genest, author of the well-known ten-volume "History of the Drama and Stage in England from 1660 to 1830," appears to have been much exercised by certain lines in Robert Lloyd's poem of "The Actor":—

> Once on the stage, in Rome's declining days,
> When Christians were the subject of their plays,
> E'er persecution dropped her iron rod,
> And men still waged an impious war with God,
> An actor flourished of no vulgar fame,
> Nature's disciple, and GENEST his name.
> A noble object for his skill he chose,
> A martyr dying 'midst insulting foes.
> Resigned with patience to religion's laws,
> Yet braving monarchs in his Saviour's cause.
> Filled with th' idea of the sacred part,
> He felt a zeal beyond the reach of art,
> While look, and voice, and gesture, all exprest
> A kindred ardour in the player's breast;
> Till as the flame through all his bosom ran,
> He lost the Actor and commenced the Man;
> Profest the faith; his pagan gods denied,
> And what he acted then, he after died.

Mr. Genest was struck, of course, by the occurrence of his own name in the poem. "Tell me," he writes, "whence Lloyd got this story,—*et eris mihi magnus Apollo.*"

The Actor first appeared early in 1760, preceding the *Rosciad* by about a twelvemonth; and, no doubt, the success of his friend Lloyd's poem stimulated the production of Churchill's satire. *The Rosciad* was published anonymously in the first instance, and Lloyd was generally accused, notably by the *Critical Review*, of being its author, or at any rate, one of its authors; he felt it incumbent upon him, indeed, to issue an advertisement to the effect that he had not been concerned or consulted about the publication, nor had ever corrected or even seen the sheets. George Colman, it may be

noted, followed suit, and in his turn announced most solemnly "that he had not been in the least concerned in the matter." Truth to tell, Mr. Lloyd was much chagrined by the appearance of a poem which so completely eclipsed his own. *The Rosciad* triumphed, not merely because of its savage personality and caustic satire, but in right of its "superiority in force of numbers and power of imagery"; it is prized now chiefly by students of theatrical history, for its interesting gallery of portraits of the players; while *The Actor*, its *fons et origo*, is forgotten or nearly so, although it contains many passages that are worthy to be remembered. To later generations Lloyd is mainly known as the author of that versified edition of the fable of the "Hare and the Tortoise," which has appeared in so many "Speakers" and collections of "Elegant Extracts," with its well-known opening :—

> In days of yore, when time was young,
> When birds conversed as well as sung,

and its concluding moral :—

> But slow and steady wins the race.

Mr. Genest has not been the only one impressed and posed by Lloyd's poetic narrative of the Christian martyr-actor. In *The London Chronicle* for May 1, 1760, appears a letter from a correspondent proffering the following explanation :—

"Many people having been curious to know from whence this story is taken, perhaps it may be some satisfaction to your readers to know it is to be found in Surius, vol. iv. The thing happened in the time of the Emperor Diocletian, who at first imagined the actor to be only endeavouring to sustain the character he was representing; but being at length convinced of the sincerity of his conversion, he first ordered the new Christian to be put to the torture and afterwards to be beheaded; all which our theatrical martyr endured with the utmost constancy. There is also in the 'Martyrologia Romana' an account of two other actors named Ardalion and Porphyry, who were converted in the same manner upon the stage."

Let me add that I have not verified this explanation, that I boast no acquaintance with the authorities to which it refers, and that I reproduce it merely for the reason that it seems to afford the exact information desired by Mr. Genest.

At a moment when certain clergymen are raising their voices against the drama—one silly creature in a cassock venturing to declare that "either the theatre must be given up or Christ must be lost"—it may be apposite to note not merely that the players have contributed to the muster-roll of Christian martyrs, but also

that intimate and cordial relations have from time to time subsisted between the ecclesiastical and the histrionic professions. To the industry and the love of his subject exhibited by a Bath clergyman we owe Genest's voluminous work before mentioned, a production invaluable to the student of dramatic literature and stage history; many of the clergy have as dramatists served the theatre and secured its applause; some have even appeared upon the scene as players. It is needless to set forth the names of the divines who have shone as writers of plays, from the Rev. Nicholas Udall, M.A., in succession Master of Eton College, Rector of Braintree, Prebend of Windsor, Rector of Calborne, and Master of Westminster School, the author of the comedy of *Roister Doister,* 1553, to Dean Milman and the Rev. James White. Concerning the clergymen who have figured on the boards as actors, information is less current. It is certain, however, that in the year 1768 a gentleman in holy orders presented himself upon the Dublin stage as the personator of the low comedy character of Scrub in the *Beaux's Stratagem* of Farquhar. This is how one Walker, an actor—he was said to have been famous for his tyrants, his wife a skilled representative of chambermaids—wrote of the matter to Garrick: "We have a parson to appear in Scrub, with Mr. Mossop as Archer: such an extra-ordinary metamorphosis will no doubt excite curiosity. The town cannot now complain that they have had no novelty; this is perhaps the greatest the stage ever knew—though it is thought the canonical gentlemen will be so scandalized as to influence a party against him; but, however it happens, it will bring one great house at least, perhaps several; and if we can but escape civil, we do not much mind ecclesiastical censure. Excommunication is not half so terrible to our state as an execution." The theatre was at this time in pecuniary straits. Of another clerical player we read in an account of certain theatrical entertainments presented at the Duke of Leinster's princely mansion at Cartown, in 1761. One of the plays was the *Beggar's Opera,* and in the list of performers, which included such distinguished names as the Earl of Charlemont, Lady Louisa Connolly, &c., appeared the surprising announcement, "Lockit by the Rev. Dean Marly." This gentleman also spoke a prologue upon this occasion, written by himself, and making special allusion to his own share in the representation. The concluding lines are as follows:

> And when this busy mimic scene is o'er,
> All shall resume the worth they had before;
> Lockit himself his knavery shall resign,
> And lose the Gaoler in the dull Divine.

The Rev. Dean Marly became in later years Bishop of Water-

ford. If for no other reason, he may be accounted famous as the only bishop who ever took part upon the stage in a performance of the *Beggar's Opera*.

SKETCHES OUT OF THE LIFE OF A GREAT SINGER.

By Richard Mansfield.

PROBABLY no woman ever had better opportunity for gathering information of an interesting and amusing character than Madame R——, and it may be justly observed that few women knew better how to display that information than she. Brought from her earliest childhood into close contact with courts and continental court life, her fund of anecdotes and historiettes (if such a word may be allowed) was as endless as they were entertaining, and proved her to be a woman of keen observation and vast humour. It is only to be regretted, that, in repeating some of the anecdotes I have heard, it is impossible for me to reproduce her inimitable mimicry of the great personages of whom she spoke, or her graphic and elaborate descriptions of place and dress.

During the reign of the late and somewhat eccentric Emperor of Austria, Madame R—— was for some time at the court of Vienna; and if ever I had reason to doubt the reported insanity of his Majesty, it was on account of his decided partiality for the great Prima Donna. Her tales of the Viennese Court were many and amusing, but I can only remember a very few likely to be of any interest to the theatrical world.

The Esterhazy family had attached to their mansion or palace a private theatre, in which it was the delight of their friends and themselves to give representations of plays then in favour, before the Emperor, the court, and the élite of Vienna. Madame R—— was naturally in great demand, and, besides being called upon to fill the chief rôles, she spent no little time in instructing the Princesses in the art of stage "get-up." Despite all her exertions, however, the performances did not always run as smoothly as might have been desired, and one in particular appears to have come to thorough grief. I cannot remember what particular play it was the Esterhazies had announced; but, whatever it was, the Emperor graced the performance with his presence, seated in a delightfully comfortable fauteuil very near the stage; and all the court was there in grand gala. The Emperor having been coaxed to silence (for he was an imperial chatterbox), the first act commenced, and everything went well until the elder Esterhazy, stabbed to the heart, had to fall dead upon the stage, and chose to fall just beneath the

huge candelabra. Now most unfortunately, owing to a draught in the upper regions, the waxlights of the candelabra were dripping, and one by one drops of hot wax fell upon the upturned face of the prostrate count. He bore it like a Spartan for some time, then he commenced to wink violently (the Emperor leaning forward was eagerly watching the situation), and at last, an extra hot drop having stung him between the eyes, he sprang to his feet, exclaiming: "Der Teufel mag hier todt sein—ich aber nicht!" (The devil may be dead here—but not I!), and walked himself off amidst the laughter of the audience and to the great delight of the Emperor. Silence, after a while having been restored, the second act commenced, but proved even more disastrous than the first. The author had introduced a supper in the first scene, and the Esterhazies, by no means content with the shams which a regular stage supper affords, had provided a most gorgeous feast,—real champagne, huge patés de foie gras, any many other delicacies. To this the dramatic personæ of the piece quietly sat down and proceeded to enjoy it. Now the Emperor was particularly fond of champagne, it amounted almost to a passion with him. He fidgeted in his chair, he leant forward, he moved closer to the stage, and it was very evident to all the court that the Imperial mouth watered. More champagne was brought on to the stage; his Majesty could stand it no longer, he sprang on to the stage, at the same time exclaiming: "Na! wenn's champagner giebt, da bin ich auch dabei!" (What champagne! Then I must join you!) It is needless to say that the last act was not played that night. The eccentric Emperor's reception of poor Dreyshok has become historical, although I think Madame R——, who was an eye-witness, was the one to relate it first. Music was very often the only means of keeping his Imperial Majesty quiet, and Madame R—— had commenced a small concert by singing "The Last Rose of Summer." This so pleased the Emperor that he made her repeat it six times and it was only upon her venturing earnestly to plead fatigue that his Majesty refrained from insisting on a seventh performance. Dreyshok followed, and it being his first appearance at court, he was naturally very anxious to please. The weather was intensely warm, and the myriad lights of the candelabra and the objection the Emperor entertained for open windows, made the heat of the saloons almost unbearable. Yet Dreyshok laboured bravely, and when he rose from the piano to make his bow, the perspiration was literally streaming from off his face; and to render the poor pianist's situation still more painful, he dared not dry his face with his pocket handkerchief before the Emperor, for fear of offending against court etiquette. However, it was evident that his Majesty

was pleased, he advanced smiling towards Dreyshok, and Dreyshok awaited with bowed head the compliments which were doubtless to be forthcoming. "Lieber Herr Dreyshok," said Franz in the broadest Austrian dialect, "I have heard Moschelles, I have heard Thalberg—I have heard all the greatest players, but I never, I never — and Dreyshok bowed very low I never saw anybody perspire as you do."

Madame R—— was on one occasion singing at Magdeburg in Germany. The opera for the night was *Der Freischütz.* The opera-house was an extremely small one and the manager an extremely stout man, who appeared to be stage-manager, scene-shifter, and gasman all in one. "Madame," he said, before the performance, "na, sie werden sehn, we have arranged it magnificently—I have arranged the finest tableau that was ever seen—you will be astonished!—na, es würd doch schön sein!—ah, you will see!" and he trotted off, rubbing his hands delightedly. The night came, and with it the scene in the *Freischütz* in which the wild huntsman and his pack career across the stage. This was to be the chef d'œuvre, the success of the evening,—the music might go as it liked, so might the huntsman and his dogs;—but a boar—a cardboard boar full of squibs and crackers and fireworks, was to astonish the audience. The wild huntsman and pack of hell-hounds careered as best they could across the stage in a dim blue light; then came the wild boar—the manager was working the apparatus—he had lit the fusee at the boar's tail—he (the manager) was dancing with excitement, the animal was slowly jerked on to the stage:—"It has stuck fast—no, it moves!"—the perspiration is streaming off the face of the manager, who is in his shirt-sleeves. "Well! will it go off!—will it go off!—Ah—das verfluchte Schwein!—will it go off! Es ist ausgegangen—the fusee is out;" and the manager, no longer able to bear the strain on his nerves, rushes on to the stage in his shirt-sleeves and applies a lighted candle to the tail of the refractory boar.

THE DEARTH OF ORIGINALITY.

By Sydney Grundy.

IN this world a great deal of nonsense is talked about everything; and about nothing is more nonsense talked than about the dearth of originality in English dramatic literature. It is generally assumed that originality in English play-writing is an absolutely unknown quantity, and its absence is promptly and cheerfully ascribed to the universal barrenness and incompetency of English playwrights. It may be that there is some truth in this; but even

if there be, nobody ever seems to take into account or even to be aware of the practical difficulties in the way of originality, which are to be found in the present situation of theatrical affairs. If these be examined, it will be found that there is quite as much originality in English dramatic composition as is to be expected under the peculiar circumstances of the time.

There are two classes of authors: there are the dozen or so of writers who by indefatigable effort have at last cleft their way into the sacred circle which surrounds the stage, and solidly established their position; and there are the crowd of outside authors who have never pierced the barrier at all, or have at most gained an occasional and uncertain foothold. From one or other of these classes all our plays must come. The one class has more orders on its hands than it can adequately execute. Whatever it produces finds an immediate and profitable market. Why should it trouble itself to be original? It can get no more for an original production than for an adaptation; and, talk as we like about the sweets of fame, money is what men write for, after all. From the other class of authors originality is even less to be expected. If managers are sceptical of their ability, and loth to trust them under any circumstances, how much more loth are managers to trust them when they are original? Young writers, as a rule, begin by being original; but they soon see the error of their ways. In adaptation lies their only chance.

Nor is the manager entirely in the wrong. The public now-a-days demands elaboration of stage-setting, or is at any rate supposed to do so. The production of a new piece, therefore, is a matter of some hundreds, possibly some thousands of pounds. No man of business cares to risk so much upon a doubtful venture, when he can to some degree ensure success. And what plan can be safer than to put upon the stage a version of some piece which, in another country, has secured approval, which has been well advertised in all the English papers, and about which curiosity has been excited? It is impossible to controvert the manager's position. Excessive luxury in stage appointments has done as much as anything to check originality.

At one time, it appeared as if the revival of morning performances would by some measure rectify this fault. It seemed as if these isolated entertainments, which are comparatively inexpensive and commit a manager to nothing, were a heaven-sent opportunity for trying those experiments which are too dangerous to attempt at night. But the attitude of the press has summarily dashed all hope in this direction. The fiat seems to have gone forth that all new pieces produced at morning performances are to be ignored; and that if any piece which was originally so produced presumes to show its face at night, it shall be treated as a reproduction of old stock.

There are some journals, it is true, which do not carry out this policy; but the exceptions are too unimportant to affect the operation of the rule. The nett result is, that to play a piece for the first time in a morning is to strangle it in its birth.

When it is borne in mind that a successful adaptation is quite as profitable to a manager as a successful original play; that it is infinitely more profitable to an established author, because he arrives at the same result with the expenditure of less than half the time and trouble; and that it is next to impossible for a new author to get an original play produced at all, it will be seen that there is quite as much originality in modern English drama as can reasonably be expected. Added to these considerations is the fact that with every successive generation it becomes increasingly difficult to be original; and that the technical standard now applied to theatrical productions is higher than it has ever been in the history of literature. It is no exaggeration to say that many of the plots and much of the construction of Shakspere would utterly break down beneath the criticism of to-day.

Nothing can be more unjust than to compare our stage with that of France. The conditions are entirely different. The English playwright is debarred from dealing with the most dramatic episodes of life; and plots and situations which in their adapted form are tolerated, and even applauded, would not for an instant be endured if they were the original production of an English author. Assimilate the conditions, and the English drama will compare with that of France more favourably than many of its critics stop to think. Strike out of serious French drama what may be called the element of adultery, and all that is evolved from and connected with it; then strike out the duel, and all that is evolved from that, and where is serious French drama? Strike out of French comic drama the same elements—obscenity, suggestiveness, and equivoque—and the French comic drama is wiped out as with a sponge.

In truth, considering how few the writers are whom the exclusive policy of English management permits to occupy the stage, and the peculiar conditions which surround the theatre of to-day, the wonder is that we get as much originality as we do. Whatever place in literature be assigned to Mr. Byron's plays, they are invariably original. Mr. Albery has certainly written enough original pieces to entitle him to the name of an original playwright. Mr. Wills has done plenty of original work. Mr. Taylor, Mr. Burnand, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Dubourg, and Mr. Meritt have all written original plays; whilst, as for Mr. Gilbert, he is original to the verge of eccentricity. Whatever fault is to be found with the productions of these authors, it is not on the score of non-originality that they are justly

open to attack; nor should it be forgotten that in the case of Mr. Byron, Mr. Albery, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Dubourg, Mr. Meritt, and Mr. Gilbert, it is their original work which has been artistically most successful. It is no detraction from their originality that the majority of these gentlemen have been adapters also. An author who writes one original play and adapts another is quite as original as an author who writes one original play, and adapts none at all.

It is rather to the smallness of the number of our dramatists than to their sterility that the dearth of originality is to be ascribed; and those who earnestly deplore this dearth would do well to turn their attention from unjust denunciation of individuals to the improvement of that system of management which so rigidly restricts their number. When anybody feels disposed to raise the wail of lamentation over the poverty of native invention, it would be well if he stopped to consider whether there is in London at the present moment a single manager who is honestly and sincerely desirous of procuring a "new and original" author; and at the same time taking any practical steps to obtain one. One thing is certain, that original dramas do not write themselves; or being written, do not read themselves; or being read, do not exactly adapt themselves to the instant requirements of a particular theatre, and the idiosyncrasies of a particular company; nor can it be expected that new writers will spring up out of the earth perfect at all points in the most difficult of all forms of composition. The wail over the dearth of originality in English play-writing, even so far as it is warranted by facts, is simply the old wail that we are not reaping where we have not strawed.

"STOCK" *v.* "STAR" COMPANIES.

By W. Davenport Adams.

MR. H. J. BYRON has already touched in these pages on the subject of "stock" companies versus travelling ones. He is evidently inclined towards the latter, and for reasons which ought to commend themselves to the public, if not to the "profession." It is undeniably the public which benefits primarily by the system which the "star" combinations have introduced. For a long time "stock" companies were "the thing;" and the results were, first, that at several London theatres *corps dramatiques* existed, which, for power and completeness of *tout ensemble*, left nothing to be desired; and, second, that the provincial theatres were the means of raising up a number of artists well qualified to reinforce acceptably the London stage. Both these results had

their advantages, for they had undoubtedly the effect of forming a distinctly national school of acting, of whom the masters and the leading pupils are now rapidly passing from our gaze. Those were the days in which the Haymarket combination was a power in the land, and in which such theatres as those of Edinburgh and Glasgow were the hotbeds in which young histrionic plants were brought to agreeable maturity. Those days are virtually gone, and the question is whether the fact of their being so is or is not a fact to be rejoiced over.

On the whole, I am inclined to say it is. Of course, the advantages of a "stock" company are obvious. It gives young artists constant practice, and it gives them practice in a remarkably wide range of parts. The result is that their capacities are tested and strengthened to the utmost, and that they are able to attain on all occasions to a certain standard of histrionic excellence. They are always "ready." There is scarcely a part in the legitimate or romantic drama in which they have not figured, and which they cannot undertake "at the shortest notice." This, of course, is a qualification which endears them to the managers, and which ensures them a regular engagement. But I am not so sure that the qualification is one which benefits them in an artistic sense. "Stock" artists are "ready" enough, but they are "rough and ready." They have so much to do—so many rôles to assume, in most cases, in the course of a week—that, "respectable" as they invariably are in their appearances, they rarely rise above the mediocrity which is absolutely forced upon them. An artist cannot play everything equally well, and it is too much to expect of a "leading lady" that she should have the ability to shine in all the parts which are given to her in the duration of an ordinary season. It is rather to be anticipated—and it is generally the case—that she will be fairly good in all, but good to an extent which, if it satisfies an uncritical audience, is irritating, in its middlingness, to an educated mind, and tends to perpetuate in the artist a mere dead-level of artistic tolerableness. It may be conceded that a "stock" artist is generally "correct" enough, but he or she is "correct" enough only with a persistency and an invariability which in most instances render future improvement improbable, if not impossible.

And if "stock" companies are, in the directions I have indicated, bad for the artists composing them, they are, I venture to think, bad for the public which is asked to support them. There undoubtedly was a time when most country audiences were willing to tolerate the performances of a "stock" company throughout a season, but that time has evidently gone by. Even country people will not put up with local artists when there is no reason why they

should not have opportunities of seeing the best that Great Britain can produce. It was all very well to put up with "stock" performances so long as the "stock" system was in vogue;—it was a case of having to be contented with what it was possible to obtain. Now, as everybody knows, there is scarcely an histrionic artist of any eminence who is not in the habit of touring from Aberdeen to Southampton, and from Belfast to Cork—of touring, not as he or she used to do, by himself or by herself, and trusting to the support of local companies, but with a company specially selected for the performance of particular plays. It is this system against which so many excellent "old fossils" are never tired of declaiming. They would not object so much to the "stars" coming down singly on the folds, but they demur most strongly to their coming with an army of supporters. They declare that the system is eating into the vitals of the profession, and for this reason: that the companies, in too many instances, are made up of individuals who have been "got up" specially for their special parts, and who, outside of those parts, would make a ridiculous figure on the stage. They argue that the inevitable outcome of this system will be to create a body of bad amateurs, instead of supporting a body of trustworthy professionals—of professionals able and willing to do respectably any sort of histrionic work.

And, no doubt, too many of the so-called London companies do contain a certain percentage of "new hands," who are capable of performing a certain number of parts, and no more,—who have been coached for the occasion, and who owe their position more to their pretty faces, or their well-filled purses, than to their artistic abilities and acquirements. With this, however, the public has nothing to do. If the individuals in question perform their parts acceptably, that is all that the public asks from them. It is no business of the public's whether they are amateurs or professionals. Besides, what is an amateur? Why should not a well-to-do person go on to the stage if he or she likes, so long as he or she has the requisite capacity? The experience will come in time, and then what is there to differentiate them from other artists? Granted that some of these "new hands" are dolls and always will be dolls;—well, it is only fair to say that they are generally fitted with parts in which their dollishness is absolutely in their favour. Moreover, all the travelling companies do not consist of dolls. If they did, they would not be so popular as they are. On the contrary, they are, at their best, composed of the most able artists which it is found possible to get together; whilst, at their worst, they are as a rule perfectly adequate for the performance of their task. It is that, in fact, which is at the bottom of their success, and which has

tended so much to the damage of "stock" companies;—that the "star" companies are so good all round; that the pieces they play are performed with so much finish and completeness. The public is sure that, whatever may be the individual merits of a "star" troupe, its *tout ensemble* will be agreeable; that all its members will play well up to each other; and that the plays they produce will be given with all the smoothness which comes of repeated appearances. Add to this the fact that the "star" company system insures for the theatre-going public constant variety, and, frequently, acquaintance simultaneously with the metropolis with the very latest novelties of the day, and you have, I think, very excellent and irrefutable reasons for the widely-spread popularity of the new order of things.

A word, too, may be said as to the bearing of the matter on the interests of dramatic authors. I am not surprised, I confess, that Mr. Byron and other playwrights of the day should approve so strongly of "star" companies as they do. Hitherto, they were very much at the mercy of provincial managers, who might, and did very frequently, put their plays on the stage in a manner by no means calculated to do them justice. The various parts were placed, too often, in the hands of performers incapable of representing them, whilst but little attention was paid to the character of the *mise-en-scène*. *Now*, matters are differently arranged. The author can not only "cast" his own production, and so secure the right men and the right women for the right parts, but he can ensure, before the company leaves London, that the drama will be properly put upon the stage. He can superintend rehearsals, and send the troupe out into the country with almost every attitude cut out for them,—an advantage which tells as favourably for the public as the author, seeing that both are equally interested in the perfect performance of the piece.

I have said that, as regards the public and "the profession," it is the public which benefits primarily by the "star" company system; and no doubt this is the case. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the system really tells against the general prosperity of "the profession." "Star" companies are not like the poet-laureate's immemorial "Brook,"—they do not "go on for ever;" they are more like the theological systems of which Mr. Tennyson speaks elsewhere, insomuch as "they have their day and cease to be." New combinations are for ever being formed, and the various artists engaged are for ever entering on a new phase of experience. By this means they get change of occupation, but they do not get it, as the "stock" artist does, at the expense of all finish and completeness. On the contrary, they have time and opportunity

in which to study and elaborate their parts until those parts are played as nearly to perfection as the abilities of the artists will allow. Moreover, they have the further advantage of appearing constantly before fresh audiences in various localities, and thus acquiring a confidence which results in desirable ease and elegance of demeanour. A "stock" artist is apt to fossilize under the evil influence of applause derived from audiences which remain very much the same from day to day. He or she comes to set up for himself or for herself a standard which is good enough for the inhabitants of a particular locality, but is assuredly not good enough for the artist or for the country generally.

At the same time, we need not be afraid of the total extinction of the familiar "stock" company of old. It still lingers in the provinces, and may be expected always to exist, for the simple reason that there will always be communities which are big enough and rich enough to support local artists, but are neither rich enough nor big enough to induce the "star" companies to visit them. Communities in this position must put up with such histrionic treats as they can obtain, and in acting before such communities a certain proportion of the profession may still get their experience, and obtain their monetary reward. "Stock" artists may, however, unquestionably make up their minds to this,—that as soon as a community becomes able to do without them, it will not hesitate to do so, and will welcome heartily the visits of such "star" companies as its size and its resources may attract.

OPÉRA-BOUFFE.

By Henry Hersee.

SCARCELY ten years have elapsed since the rise of opéra-bouffe as a form of entertainment for the English people. For a time it flourished vigorously, and appeared to take firm root amongst us; but after six or seven years of prosperity it began to wither, and has now approached the last stage of decline. At the present moment there is but one theatre in London at which opéra-bouffe is performed. It will be interesting to glance at the history of this peculiar branch of the lyric drama, and to examine the causes of its sudden popularity and its ignominious decay. In the first place, however, it will be desirable to define what is meant by "opéra-bouffe," and to point out wherein it differs from comic opera.

The true "opéra-bouffe," like the Italian "opera-buffa," primarily signifies "comic opera," but has of late years been employed

in France, and in the countries which dishonestly profit by the use of materials produced by French composers—to designate a special class of comic operas, first brought into vogue at the Bouffes-Parisiens Theatre, Paris. With the important exception that they are provided with original music, they resemble the musical burlesques which were for a long time popular on the English stage. Those only are genuine opéras-bouffes in which the characters are taken from mythology, history, and poetry, and are presented under ridiculous aspects. Offenbach's *Orphée aux Enfers,* and *La Belle Helène,* Hervé's *Chilperic* and *Le Petit Faust* may be cited as examples. Where the plot and the *dramatis personæ* are entirely imaginary, as in *La Périchole,* by Offenbach, *L'Œil Crevé,* by Hervé, and *La Fille de Madame Angot,* by Lecocq, no one is burlesqued, and instead of opéra-bouffe we have comic opera. No one has ever thought of styling *La Cheval de Bronze,* by Auber, an opéra-bouffe, yet in plot and incidents it is as farcical as the three operas by Offenbach, Hervé, and Lecocq, last-named. The operas by which Lecocq is best known in this country, *La Fille de Madame Angot, Giroflé-Giroflá, Les Près S. Gervais, La Marjolaine,* and *Le Petit Duc,* belong to the category of comic operas. The same remark will apply to Offenbach's operas, *Les Brigands, Le Pont des Soupirs, Le Roi Carotte,* and *La Créole,* to *Les Turcs,* by Hervé, and to many other works which have been improperly classed among opéras-bouffes. It is true that such works bear much the same relation to the comic operas of Mozart, Rossini, and Auber, as farce bears to legitimate comedy, and might properly take the second rank in a classification which should comprise, 1st. Comic Opera; 2nd. Farcical Opera; 3rd. Opéra-Bouffe. Were this classification adopted, *Les Près S. Gervais* (Lecocq), *La Périchole* (Offenbach), *Les Cloches de Corneville* (Planquette), and *Fatinitza* (Von Suppé), would be placed in Class 1; *Le Roi Carotte,* and *Le Pont des Soupirs* (Offenbach), *The Sorcerer,* and *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Arthur Sullivan), *La Fille de Madame Angot,* and *La Marjolaine* (Lecocq), and *L'Œil Crevè* (Hervé), in Class 2. Unfortunately, a number of comic operas and farcical operas fell into the hands of our opéra-bouffe companies; who cared little for art, and sought success by the aid of meretricious attractions. It is but recently that a wiser instinct has taught managers to discard the name of opéra-bouffe, and to claim support for "light comic opera." Most of the works above-named were produced in London as "opéras-bouffes," and must, for our present purpose, be so considered.

The rise of opéra-bouffe in this country commenced with the production of Offenbach's opera *La Grande Duchesse,* which was brought out at Covent Garden Theatre, with an English adapta-

tion, written by Mr. Charles Lamb Kenney, who very sensibly abstained from "localising" the story, and from seasoning the dialogue with "topical" allusions. The "Grand Duchess of Gerolstein" found an attractive representative in the late Miss Julia Matthews; the late Mr. W. Harrison was a capital "Fritz;" Miss Augusta Thomson was admirable as "Wanda;" and Mr. Odell, Mr. Stoyle, and other excellent artists took parts in the performance. The plot was amusing; and, although not downright indelicate, had a certain flavour of naughtiness which piqued attention. The music—fresh, tuneful, and sparkling—captivated the public, and soon every one was singing, humming, or whistling "The Sabre of my Sire," and "I dote on the Military," though few were aware that the last-named melody was stolen from Beethoven. The *Grande Duchess* became the talk of the town, and subsequently made a triumphant tour of the provinces, under the management of Mr. John Russell. Next came M. Hervé's *Chilperic*, which was produced at the Lyceum Theatre with lavish munificence of *mise-en-scène*, under the personal direction of the composer, who played the title-character with a vivacity which communicated itself to his comrades. On this occasion Miss Selina Dolaro, as the Spanish Princess, and M. Marins, as Landry, made their *débûts* on the London boards, and soon gained the popularity which they have ever since retained. *Chilperic* was a brilliant success, and was followed by an English version of Hervé's *Petit Faust*, in which Miss Emily Soldene, in the character of "Marguérite," commenced a long series of successes. *Le Petit Faust*, with its wealth of melody, its amusing incidents, and its ingenious parodies of M. Gounod's *Faust*, delighted musicians, as well as the general public, but it brought with it the seeds of that decay which has overtaken opéra-bouffe. It was then that the reign of the "extra ladies" commenced. Pretty faces were more highly valued than vocal or histrionic ability, and the stage was crowded with amateurs who had nothing in their favour but the bodily charms which they were made to exhibit with a liberality closely approaching indecency. Since that time French opéras-bouffes have, for the most part, been reproduced in London with little regard to the interests of the original librettists and composers, and legs have been more highly prized than brains. In the English version of Offenbach's *Geneviève de Brabant*, produced at the Philharmonic Theatre, Islington, and recently revived at the Alhambra Theatre, the original plot was so distorted as to become incomprehensible, the weak dialogue was spiced with vulgar, well-worn jokes and clap-trap "topical" allusions; the music was similarly ill-treated. Solos and trios were turned into choruses in order that the stage

might be filled with young girls, dressed in silk fleshings and little else; a "Kiss Song," and other compositions not even selected from Offenbach's works, were interpolated, and art was thrust into the background in order that dissolute young "gents" and battered old rakes might be attracted. Stimulated by unwholesome aliment, the appetites of these estimable personages became fiercer and fiercer; like Oliver Twist they "asked for more," and lost their zest for opéra-bouffe when they found that the limits of indelicacy had been reached. It seemed likely that they would find a benefactor in the manager who opened St. James's Theatre with an English adaptation of Offenbach's *Vert-Vert*, but their hopes were crushed by the vigorous interposition of an indignant Lord Chamberlain. Since that occurrence opéra-bouffe—of the kind properly so called—as a popular form of entertainment, has become almost extinct.

It is probable that opéra-bouffe would have flourished much longer in this country but for the inartistic and unconscientious manner in which the work of adaptation has generally been performed. The original French libretti are usually interesting and witty; the English versions, vapid and vulgar. The French libretto of *Geneviève de Brabant* is irresistibly amusing; the English version now employed at the Alhambra Theatre is little better than a farrago of tedious nonsense. Messrs. C. L. Kenney, Henry S. Leigh, Campbell Clarke, Sutherland Edwards, and Clement Scott have shown that it is possible to impart all needful piquancy to English adaptations of French operas without departing from the original plots, and without substituting "topical" clap-trap, stale jokes, and slang for sparkling dialogue. Had the example set by these gentlemen been followed by some other adaptors, who shall for the present be unnamed, we might have had longer to wait for the withering away of opéra-bouffe.

ORDERS FOR THE PLAY.

By George Grossmith, Jun.

If a man be at all anxious to know how many friends he possesses in the world, let him, if possible, accept an engagement at a London theatre for a short time. In two months he will have heard from all his friends and acquaintances; from every man whom he has ever met, and from numberless persons whom he has probably never met at all. Some of the letters contain congratulations or condemnations in the cloak of advice, but the majority is from that section of the British public who labour

under the delusion that, because they know or have met an actor, they are entitled to enter theatres free of payment for admission. We have not had time to thoroughly enter into the statistics of the matter, but we believe we are right in asserting that nearly all these modest or immodest requests are for private boxes and stalls for a Saturday night during the height of the play's success. Of course, no etiquette in applying for "passes" need be studied. That is quite out of the question. When a man applies for a box on the ground that it is "not for himself, but some country friends," it does not occur to him that his reason for asking is the very one why his application should be immediately refused. Nor does the man who begs an order to repay some one "to whom he is under an obligation" realize that he is at the same time only shifting the obligation: he is borrowing money of Smith to pay Jones, and imagines therefore that he is out of debt. No doubt orders would never have been expected by those unconnected with the theatrical profession if it had not been the custom of managers indiscriminately "papering the house," in order to give the public a false impression that the business was good in spite of the piece being unattractive. The custom is happily dying out, and those outside the profession are endeavouring to come under the head of those privileged to enter free. Professional men who have earned some fame, and their families, should, of course, be admitted if there is room. It is rather ludicrous to notice some who lay claim to this distinction. Supernumeraries from London and country theatres will present their cards, if they have such things, and so will the singing-master from Mudly-on-Pool and the drummer at the Thameside Music-hall. But the impudence of people who have not even these small claims is something really most amusing. The following have been found and taken note of:—"Dear Sir,—I hear the business at your house is very bad. Could you send me a box and some stalls. Any night this week except Monday and Wednesday," &c. This is also rather modest: "Dear Sir,—I once had the pleasure of meeting at a gentleman's house your father, who kindly after dinner gave us a little recital. Seeing that you are doing something in his way, I shall certainly come and witness your performance. When could you send me a box? I am afraid your father would not remember my name. Pardon the liberty," &c. One of five hundred schoolfellows writes: "Do you remember me, and would you be surprised to hear I have gone into trade (the tea line)? Can you send me a pass to any part of the house? I may be able to do something for you in return." We suppose he means that the next time we meet him he will draw from his pocket a pound of tea for our acceptation. It is very

good of him, but it does not dispense with the fact that he has no right to enter a theatre free. The following is very sensible on the face of it: "Dear Mr. ——,—I must write and congratulate you. I have read all the notices about you. I came down the other night for the purpose of paying to hear you, but could not get a seat, the house was so crammed. Can you oblige me with two stalls?" He must think managers belong to a philanthropical society, which makes it a duty to admit to theatres all the poor individuals who cannot get in by payment, and that a special "circle" is therefore kept empty for them. It is very tempting to attach the real names to these epistles, and we are not so sure that by doing so in future the system of "begging for orders" would not be entirely abolished in the course of time. It is ridiculous to suppose that because a man happens to be the friend of an actor he is entitled to free admissions to theatres. It is equally ridiculous to imagine that actors always walk about with a pocket crammed full of orders. It is a disagreeable thing for an actor to have to refuse, and perhaps offend, a friend; and rather than do so it is well known that several of our popular men on the stage have actually purchased boxes and presented them as orders. Some generous beings are under the impression that they are entitled to enter a theatre free all the year round, because they take tickets for the actor's annual benefit. Many a man would rather invite an actor to dine at the cost of two or three pounds, and be "passed in" free afterwards, than to go straight to the theatre and pay ten shillings for a stall. It is simply the satisfaction he feels at getting something for nothing—a feeling which prompts the lazy vagabond who won't work to stand at the corner of a street with his hat held out. True friends of an actor should bear this in mind, that he is expected to help to draw money to the theatre at which he appears, and that his managers very soon discover when he attracts nothing but "orders."

A SIGH FROM THE STALLS.

By Henry S. Leigh.

As oft as I saunter at eve to the play
(Where I saunter as oft as I please)
They present me a pass, in their affable way,
To inhabit the stalls at mine ease.
Now and then—in the waits—with a brow overcast
In regretful abstraction I sit,
Looking back to the days—or the nights—of my past,
When I paid second-price for the pit.

Sometimes—thither bound by my duties, of course,—
I behold a new comedy played.
When the wags and the critics have mustered in force
It is quite an impressive parade.
But they hint, one and all, that the dialogue drags,
And they tell me 'tis wanting in wit.—
I was not of the world of your critics and wags
When I paid second-price to the pit.

Mine oar at the galleys of Commerce I tugged
From a Monday till Saturday came.
(Though a slave I was happy : 'twas long e're I hugged
Any dreams of ambition or fame.)
And I ever felt seized on the Saturday night
With my weekly theatrical fit.
I was filled—I was thrilled—with a throb of delight
When I paid second-price to the pit.

One fact I remember—the saddest of facts !—
In a tragedy such as *Macbeth*,
I could only enjoy its two ultimate acts,
And be in at the murderer's death.
Did I ever complain of a matter so small ?
Did I ever object ?—Not a bit.—
'Twas a favour, thought I, to see *any at all*,
When I paid second-price to the pit.

I feel that when youth and its pleasures depart
It is useless, or worse, to repine ;
To bewail the glad years when a freshness of heart
And a lightness of spirit were mine.
Yet, my reader, you must not account it a crime—
When those years through my mem'ry may flit—
If I dawdle in rhyme o'er the far-away time
When I paid second-price to the pit.

Portraits.

VIII.—MR. HERMANN VEZIN.

NEARLY a quarter of a century ago a young law student set sail from New York for Europe. Born at Philadelphia, of German parents, he had graduated B.A. at the University of Pennsylvania, and three years afterwards received the degree of M.A. Hard reading had impaired his eyesight, and it was for the purpose of placing himself in the hands of an oculist of repute at Berlin that the journey to the East was undertaken. His father—a prosperous merchant of Philadelphia—also hoped that the change of scene and an extended knowledge of the world would cure him of an "insane desire" which he had manifested to go on the stage. This hope was soon dispelled for ever, as will be well understood when we state that the law student was Mr. Hermann Vezin. His eyesight having been strengthened by the treatment of the Berlin oculist, he left for London with a determination to seek fame and fortune on the stage, and in the course of a few months might have been found playing small parts in Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean's company at York. He next proceeded to Southampton, where his assiduity was so great that fascinating Mrs. Nisbet, unable for the life of her to remember his name, would speak of him as "Mr. Punctual." Much higher praise than this was awarded to him when, in the same town, he played Trueworth to her Constance in the *Love Chase*. The least that could be said of the impersonation was that it indicated a natural aptitude for stage-work. Mr. Charles Kean did not forget the young actor who had supported him at York, and before long Mr. Vezin was engaged for the Princess's Theatre. The first part he played here, if our memory does not deceive us, was the Wounded Soldier in *Macbeth*. Under the guidance of Mr. Kean he made good progress in his profession—so good, in fact, that in two years he felt strong enough as an actor to play a round of leading characters in different parts of the country. In 1857 he went on a tour in the United States, and was received there with great favour. The elder Mr. Vezin had learnt to acquiesce in his son's adoption of the stage as a profession, and the success of the young actor in his native country was not clouded by any ill-feeling on the part of his family. On his return to London he appeared at the Surrey Theatre, playing Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Shylock, King John, Louis XI., and other such parts. The *Athenæum* said that by these performances he had

L P D

THE THEATRE Nº4 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Yours sincerely
Hermann Vezin.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

assumed his right to the highest professional rank. From the Surrey he migrated to Sadler's Wells, where he supported Mr. Phelps, and in 1863 made a tour of the provinces with his accomplished wife. The success of Dr. Marston's *Donna Diana*, produced at the Princess's Theatre in 1864, was to be ascribed in a large measure to their acting. Soon afterwards Mr. Vezin appeared in two pieces which have since been associated with his name—*Doctor Davy* and the *Man o' Airlie*. His performance of the "Doctor" was remarkable for self-disguise and general finish, but it was reserved for his Man o'Airlie to convey anything like an adequate idea of his capabilities. The impersonation was pathetic and forcible in a very high degree, and those who saw can hardly ever forget the beauty of his acting in the scene where the poet supposed to be dead re-appears in his old haunts as a monument is being erected to his memory. The play itself, however, is wanting in relief and other elements of dramatic strength. In the *Rightful Heir* Mr. Vezin came before us as Sir Grey De Malpas, and in this character was described as a portrait from the gallery of our elder dramatists of the Elizabethan age. As Murdock, in *Life for Life*, he painted in powerful colours the mental state of a man who "broods over the idea of vengeance until the thought of it dethrones his reason, and becomes the master-passion of his soul.' It would take some time to mention all the characters Mr. Vezin has played at different theatres since that time; but we cannot leave this part of our pleasant task without mentioning his Martel in a *Son of the Soil*, his Sigurd in the *White Pilgrim*, his Ford in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, his Jacques in *As You Like It*, his Percy Pendragon in *Married in Haste*, his blacksmith in *Dan'l Druce*, his De Taldé in the *Danicheffs*, his Schelm in *Les Exilés*, and his Dr. Primrose in *Olivia*. Upon each of these characters, which are as different from each other as they can possibly be, he succeeded in stamping a more or less strong individuality. Meanwhile, in 1873, he played in old English comedy at the Gaiety Theatre with Mr. Phelps, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Toole; and Miss Helen Faucit, on seeing him play Macbeth, declared that his right place was in the Shaksperean drama. The acting of Mr. Vezin has not been distinguished by considerable force of passion or warmth of imagination, but in no other respect does he fall short of the highest excellence. Everything he does bears the impress of a strong and cultivated mind, of the nameless something which makes us feel that an artist is before us. His impersonations are harmonious and finished, and indicate an intuitive quickness of perception and an extensive command of the resources of his art. His elocution is superb; indeed, it may be doubted whether the longest tirade in Greek or old French tragedy would fatigue us if it were recited by him.

Feuilleton.

"ONLY A WOMAN'S HAIR."

A SEQUEL TO "BASHFUL FIFTEEN."

By Gerald Dixon.

WANTED—A Governess, experienced and middle aged. A widow not objected to. Must be competent to instruct two young children in the elements of a sound Christian education.

"What do you think of that?" asked my sister.

"Well, my dear, I fancy your advertisement will terrify most applicants for such an easy berth as our's. Why put it so severely?"

"I don't want any minxes to come here applying for the place!" replied my sister, drily.

"My dear Susan, I would back you against any young minx that ever made eyes at a curate. You discover them by intuition."

"Possibly," said Susan emphatically, although I could see that she was flattered. "*I* am in no fear of them. My only doubt is on *your* account."

"Mine?" I laughed with fictitious jocularity.

Susan was highly-principled, deeply religious, scrupulously economical, and painted execrably in water-colours; yet she had one fault, and that was her besetting passion. She was by nature and profession a man-ruler. Even her husband, a practising barrister, had discovered five years ago that India opened up a wider and more remunerative field for his talents than either the courts at Westminster or the Northern Circuit. He was rapidly rising to the front in Allahabad, was punctual in his allowances, and firmly convinced that the climate was utterly unsuited to his wife's delicate constitution, and might prove positively dangerous to the dear children. "Why don't you make your brother Horace give up his chambers, and take a house?" he wrote to his wife about four years ago. "He'll never do anything at the bar, and you would be as good as a mother-in-law to him."

When Susan made the proposition, I did not, to tell the exact truth, leap wildly to meet it half-way. On the contrary, I rather drew back, and thought I would like time to consider the matter.

But Susan would take no refusal. I had lived alone far too long, she said. I was becoming dull and selfish through lack of woman's society. She was my only sister, and was not

going to see a beloved brother go to ruin under her very nose. The exorbitant price I paid for my chambers on the first floor at the end of King's Bench Walk would cover the rent of a nice little house at Brompton. My mornings and afternoons I could devote to my work, and my evenings would be enlivened with her exhilarating companionship, and occasionally with that of the dear children.

Of course she had her way with me, just as she had with Philip Robinson, when she married him. The house down Brompton way was discovered and furnished, my cheerful chambers passed into other hands, and I took my name off every one of my clubs but one, —one of whose existence my sister was unaware.

Times had changed with me since the early days of my sojourn in London, when, as a student at the bar, I lodged in Guilford-street, and was the victim of that now popular actress Miss Minnie May. I was at least thirty-two years of age, and was convinced that the woolsack was as inaccessible to me as the bench of a county court. I had succeeded to my patrimony, and sympathised with the aristocrat who believed that politics and literature were the only occupations for a gentleman. I was one of the shining lights of a local Shakspere Society, and several of my lectures had been published, at my own expense. I had sent several articles to the *Nineteenth Century*, which were returned only for the reason that their political allusions were rather too pungent.

One morning, at the commencement of the present year, my blameless sister showed me the advertisement she had inserted in *The Times*. The dear children needed instruction. No artful chit would she admit into my house, but a staid and sober person as described by Mr. W. S. Gilbert :—

> I'm no saucy minx and giddy,
> Hussies such as they abound;
> But a clean and tidy widdy,
> Well be-known for miles around.

Yet, despite the forbidding nature of Susan's advertisement, the following morning brought us exactly one hundred and forty-five answers. I watched them as they lay in a basket close to my revered sister's feet, and fled upstairs to my library.

The same evening I accompanied Susan to the theatre. Miss Minnie May was playing Lady Teazle, and a winsome, coquettish, brilliant performance it was. A few years ago, too, I had an idea that Minnie May would never make an actress. Well, time has only shown me to have been wrong in this particular theory, as it has constantly proved me to be fallible in my practice as a lawyer.

The scythe-bearer, however, had improved rather than dimin-

ished Minnie May's charms. True, the powdered hair, the tinted cheeks, the delicate patches, and the waistless costume affected by Lady Teazles are not the clearest means by which to discover an artist's true complexion or natural shape; still there were about Minnie May an intoxicating atmosphere of youth, an exuberance of high animal spirits, and a sense of infectious good-humour that banished any idea or suggestion of age or decay.

"What do you think of Lady Teazle?" I asked Susan as we jogged homeward in our humble one-horsed brougham.

"What do I *think* of her? A shameless, painted, forward jig."

After this critical delineation of histrionic talent, I thought it better not to ask for further opinion.

"Have you chosen a governess out of the hundred and forty-five, dear?" I asked, trying if possible to mollify her.

"No, Horace, I have not. I have carefully read all the applications, and have been to a certain extent able to decipher the character of each individual applicant. None of them will do. Many of the minxes have passed Oxford and Cambridge examinations, others have taken degrees at Girton, and the impudent huzzies want as much as sixty, eighty, and a hundred guineas a-year."

"Shameful!" I ejaculated, closing my eyes and leaning back.

"But they won't impose on me. Give me an elderly person who understands her position, and is a devout Christian. I'll find one yet, or my name is not Susan Robinson."

I thought I knew of some one far away in the north-west provinces of Hindostan who wished to heaven that it wasn't; but a hint to that effect would have raised a monsoon, and I luckily remembered the difficulty of escaping from such a tempest, especially as its furies would be confined within the area of my one-horsed brougham.

So I held my peace and we arrived safe at "The Boltons"—I to smoke a cigar; she, to rush upstairs, violently awaken her slumbering babes, and listen to the tiny shivering mortals lisp out their prayers. Nurses were careless to a degree, Susan would remark, and children could come to no great harm by repeating their devotions twice in the same night.

"Poor little beggars," I thought, as I puffed a really fine old Intimidad. "Our dear mother never worried Susan and me at twelve o'clock at night." And I began to think better of my little nephew and my diminutive niece. Jack Robinson, *ætat* seven, was in the daytime a most uncompromising young ruffian, and "Jill" Robinson, who had reached the mature age of five, aided and abetted her brother with all the enthusiasm born, as I used to try and imagine, of a naturally depraved and vicious temperament.

A day or two sped, and a grand idea seized me. My reading and my observation were evidently crystallizing. They were forming themselves towards a harmonious whole—in other words, the fruit of my study and my life was ripe. Like Chateaubriand's "Atala," it had been growing for years; without my knowledge it had matured, and accident only had made me aware of its maturity. That accident was my visit to the theatre and Minnie May's interpretation of Lady Teazle.

For I believed her capable of far greater things than the realization of Sheridan's country damsel transferred to fashionable and scandalizing society. With my help she might restore the poetic drama; at all events I would give her the chance. And on a piece of foolscap I immediately set about giving her one.

In the mean time Susan discovered her devout Christian. "She is not a gem," my sister remarked, "at all events not a brilliantly polished one; but she can teach English, French, arithmetic, and music, and she only charges £25 a-year."

"And when does this economical paragon take up her abode here?" I asked carelessly.

"Oh! that's the best of the bargain. She doesn't care to live here; she is a daily governess."

The tragedy progressed. Blank-verse was evidently my *métier*, and a couple of scenes occupied only as many days. One afternoon I thought I would lunch with the children, and descended to the dining-room at the appointed hour. The economical paragon was there, and I was duly presented to Miss Jones.

The lady was evidently not in the first blush of youth. Her hair was grey, and was gathered tightly underneath a little mob-cap. Her face was set in a care-worn expression, but her hands, as is often the case, retained the comeliness of youth. Her costume was antiquated, I thought, and her eyes were disfigured by a pair of spectacles.

Miss Jones was elegant in her movements, and expressive in her actions. There was no doubt as to her being a lady, and I could not help thinking of her twenty-five pounds a year, or wondering how on earth she managed to live on it. Poor creature! and very possibly she had an aged father, a dissolute brother, or a decrepid sister at home to look after and cherish. After this meeting I almost made a practice of lunching with Jack, Jill, and the governess, Susan, of course, being zealously on guard.

The tragedy progressed favourably; the First Act was finished, and a fair copy was needed. I thought at once of Miss Jones. I suggested to Susan that the governess might be willing to add to her income by copying for me in the afternoon. My sister had no

doubt but that she would be anxious to do so; and, in point of fact, Miss Jones graciously accepted my terms.

The next day at three o'clock the two of us were hard at work in my library. Susan looked in for propriety's sake, but had several pressing appointments with her tradespeople, and could not stay.

"What do you think of the drama, Miss Jones?" I asked, trying to be easy in my demeanour.

"I think it very clever. Is it intended for the stage?"

"Oh! yes."

"You will need a great actress to represent your heroine, Hecuba."

"Yes, I know that," I returned, rubbing my hands. "What do you think of Minnie May, for example?"

"I never saw her in tragedy, Mr. Smith: has she asked you to write one for her?"

"O dear, no! I haven't spoken to Miss May for—well, a good many years now; but I intend to send her my First Act as soon as you have copied it."

Then she turned away, and as I rose to give her more of my manuscript, I happened to upset my watch, which always lies near me when I am writing, and which was lying on this occasion under some blotting-paper which I had carelessly thrown over it. The glass was broken, and the locket attached to the chain had burst open. Miss Jones picked them up, and looked at the knot of hair which was curled up inside the locket. I never met a woman yet who wasn't interested in the contents of a bachelor's locket.

"Only a woman's hair!" I said, good-humouredly. "By-the-by," I added, as she turned to go back to her desk, "that lock of hair once belonged to the lady we have been talking about."

"Indeed!" said, she, and walked back to her seat.

The next day the First Act was finished and duly sent to the popular actress at the Curtain Theatre. Before proceeding with the Second Act I thought I would wait until I heard from her; and I did, within twenty-four hours after the despatch of the precious manuscript. Her note ran thus:—

"*Victoria-street.* Thursday.

"Dear Mr. Horace Smith,—I am charmed to hear from you again, after all these years. I saw you at the theatre about a month ago. *A propos* of the tragedy, come and lunch here to-morrow at two.—Yours always sincerely, Minnie May."

And so, after the lapse of I won't say how many years, I found myself *tête-à-tête* once more with Minnie May. Time had changed her, but in every respect for the better; her figure was round and full, her face had lost that half-defiant expression which young

girls often affect, her conversation was animated and bright; in short, after the close censorship exercised by my sister Susan, I seemed to breathe a freer air.

After luncheon she gave me a cigarette, and I smoked whilst she touched the chords of her piano.

"Have you forgiven me for the trick I played you so long ago, Mr. Smith?" She touched her notes so skilfully that the sound seemed to be the natural accompaniment of her question.

"*Forgiven* you? what had I to forgive?" She laughed lightly. "And you have kept that lock of my hair until now?"

I turned round quickly. "How do you know?"

She stopped playing suddenly. "Miss Jones told me. She is an old friend. Wait a moment, I'll fetch her!" and Minnie May rushed from the room. I had not long to wait, in less than five minutes Miss Jones entered dressed exactly as she had been the day before in my library. But she wore no spectacles, and instead of the careworn expression on her face there was a charming mixture of roguery and blushes.

"Minnie," I cried and staggered, "what does this mean?"

"Only a woman's hair!" she said, and she plucked off her grey wig and mob cap and tossed them on the table.

So she had played off her art on me for the second time. Yet her reason why I could not at first discover. Something, however, in her eyes bewildered me. I know not what happened, a flood of old memories rushed upon me; in another second she was clasped in my arms.

"Don't think too badly of me," she sobbed; "I shall never forget the old days. You loved me so truly, so nobly, and—and since then many men have offered their love, but no one ever cared for me like you—oh, Horace!——"

I consoled her in the only way I knew. She went on.

"And then I saw you at the theatre and I thought you were married, and the next day I saw an advertisement in the paper, and I longed so much to hear your voice that I made up old and presented myself at your house, and then I found out you were not married, and oh, Horace!——"

"Yes, dear, what then?"

"I was so glad; and then I discovered that you still carried my lock of hair, and—and—that's all."

Minnie was hardly right. That was *not* all. She promised to become my wife on condition that I wrote no more tragedies. I complied cheerfully enough; and after braving a monsoon raised by my irreproachable sister, was steered into calmer waters by the most loving wife that ever owned unworthy man.

En Passant.

THOUGH *Polyeucte* is very successful, the admirers of M. Gounod may well wish that it had never been written, as there are circumstances connected with it which leave an ineffaceable stain on his good name. In 1870, when Paris was besieged, the composer, as many of us have heard, found an asylum at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Weldon in Tavistock-square, and was treated there with the utmost kindness and consideration. To say nothing of pecuniary aid, everything that a man inured to luxury could desire was freely accorded to him. During his stay in Tavistock-square he composed *Polyeucte,* averring that he intended the part of Pauline for his hostess. The work was soon completed, and the composer, presenting the music to Mrs. Weldon, made over to her, in return for the assistance he had received, the sole right of publishing it. The Commune overthrown, M. Gounod, proceeding to Blackwall in one of his host's carriages, embarked for France, and from that time until the present the only communication Mrs. Weldon has had from him is a legal summons to give up the opera! Such is the lady's story, which is borne out by some correspondence lately published in *Le Figaro.*

YET the man who is capable of such conduct can write of his work in such a strain as this:—"I wish to spend my remaining days in a solitude which I regard as my posthumous life. The contemporary public does not exist for me, I have nothing more to do with it. *Polyeucte* is a work of apostolic art. It is the apology and glorification of a martyr. I trust that God will permit me to finish it before my death, and if I have left in this work one action the more towards a cause I have adored, I do not ask to see the success of it. The good done by me after I am gone will be sufficient reward."

LORD CHURCHILL recently brought an action in the Bloomsbury County Court against Mr. Gooch, of the Princess's Theatre, to recover the sum of fourteen shillings, the price of two stalls. His lordship went to the theatre on the 24th June, accompanied by Lady Churchill, who was in afternoon costume. They purchased two stalls, and nothing was then said to them about dress. At the entrance to the seats, however, an attendant told Lady Churchill that she would not be allowed to wear her bonnet. Her ladyship offered to take it off, but declined to leave it in the waiting-room, although no fee was charged for taking care of it. The manager then refused either to let them in or return the money paid, and Lord and Lady Churchill left the theatre. For the plaintiff it was contended that the contract was effected by the payment of the money, and that as the condition as to not wearing a bonnet was not included therein, he was entitled to a decision in his favour. The reply was that if ladies were allowed to take bonnets into a theatre, they would carry them in their

laps or place them at their side. His Honour gave judgment for the plaintiff, refusing to grant an appeal unless the defendant, or the managers of London theatres generally, undertook to bear the costs.

Provincial critics beware! Mr. Frank Marshall frequently joins Mr. Irving on his tour to consult him on a matter of business, and woe to the unfortunate scribe who goes out of his depth in criticizing the tragedian's pronunciation. The *Manchester Courier*, in a notice of Mr. Irving's Hamlet, found fault with him on account of his pronunciation of "canonized" with a strong accent on the second syllable, and as if the o were long, "an eccentricity," says the critic, "for which it is impossible to imagine an excuse."

"Surely," writes Mr. Marshall to the editor, "your critic must be aware that 'canonized' must be always pronounced with the o long in this and in all the passages in Shakspere in which it occurs, *e.g.*, *King John*, act 3, scene 3—

> And meritorious shall that hand be called,
> Canónizéd and worshipped as a saint.

Again, in the same act, scene 4—

> And thou shalt be canóniz'd, Cardinal.

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*, act 2, scene 2—

> And fame in time to come canónize us.

See also note on the passage in *Hamlet*, Malone's edition of Shakspere vol. vii. p. 234; also Furness's Variorum edition of *Hamlet*, vol. i. p. 90 In Massinger the word is pronounced in the same way; but, independently of these examples, the line

> ——but tell
> Why thy canôniz'd bones, hearsed in death,

would not scan if the word were pronounced otherwise. Would your critic have any actor pronounce 'complete' in the line which occurs in the same speech—

> That thou, dead corse, again in cómplete steel,

with the accent on the last syllable? It is an actor's special duty to give to the rhythm of Shakspere's exquisite verse its full charm; and I think it is a critic's duty, before he blames an actor for misplacing an accent, to be sure that he (the critic) is right."

The editor, however, would not give in. Mr. Marshall was right, but it would never do to confess that the *Courier* had been in the wrong. The editor accordingly appended to the letter a note saying, "although it is quite true, as Mr. Marshall says, that the verse cannot be scanned accurately if 'canonized' be pronounced according to the authority of the dictionaries, it by no means follows that we are bound to accept Mr. Irving's reading." This was logical.

It is said that before long an unpublished tragedy by Lamartine will be brought to light. More than half a century ago, we are told, Lamartine and Monseigneur Dupanloup were guests at a country house. The poet

one evening read a tragedy to the company, who, finding that it set at defiance all the canons of the "classical" school, which had not then been overthrown, advised him to suppress it. The next morning, in deference to this counsel, he burnt the manuscript, declaring that he had made no copy of it. During the night, however, Dupanloup had come down stairs and copied the manuscript, which had been left by the poet on the table in the library. Lamartine never heard of this questionable proceeding, and it is expected that the play will shortly be published.

Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt, in view of her visit to London next June, is industriously studying English, and recently assured us that before Christmas she "would be able to speak it very well." Nevertheless, she finds as much time as usual for acting, sculpture, and painting. Her name is generally in the bills of the Comédie Française two or three times a week. Last month she completed a bust of Mdlle. Abbema, and is now engaged upon a noble figure of Music for the façade of the theatre at Monaco. Her latest effort in painting is a small portrait, in oil, of a young lady who is staying in her house. Mdlle. Bernhardt went up in the captive balloon at the Tuileries exactly twenty times. Subsequently she patronized a *ballon libre*, and as she descended at some little distance from Paris, the manager of the Comédie Française good-humouredly protested that he would take proceedings against her for violating one of the articles of her engagement. By the way, M. Melandri, of Paris, has just published photographs of the actress in the male costume which she wears while in her *atelier*, and in which, it must be said, she appears to considerable advantage.

In the *Bradford Chronicle and Mail* we find some interesting particulars as to Miss Heath's early career in London. The *Corsican Brothers* had just been brought out at the Princess's Theatre by Mr. Kean. One evening, after the performance was over, Mr. Boucicault and his friend Stoepel, the composer of the "Ghost Melodies," accompanied by two other gentlemen, were strolling towards Frith-street and Macclesfield-street, Soho, where the literature and music of the Oxford-street boards at that time had their unpretending homes. In Dean-street they noticed that, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the lamps were still alight in the theatre at present known as the Royalty. Amateurs were performing there. They stopped for a moment to look at the bill of the play. "Entrons," said Mr. Stoepel to the author of *London Assurance*, "voyons ce qu' il-y-a!" Boucicault was going to see him somewhere else first. He was not going to be bothered with seeing amateurs at that hour of the night. "Mais ça nous amusera," quoth the ever-buoyant musician, and they went in. The amateurs were not over the average of amateurs certainly—and the result was that the mercurial man of letters became fidgetty and wanted to go home. But Stoepel pointed out to him a lovely girl—a child nearly—who had just entered the scene. Mr. Boucicault stopped; he was spellbound. Here was the very impersonation of the "sweet seventeen" heroines he had dreamed of. That girl was Miss

Heath. She was only 14 years of age then, and it had been her hope to shine on the operatic rather than the dramatic boards. A master of high standing, under whom she was studying for that purpose, and many friends well qualified to speak on the subject, had pronounced her voice a contralto of unusual range and richness. Not long after Mr. Boucicault's visit to the Royalty she was engaged at the Princess's Theatre.

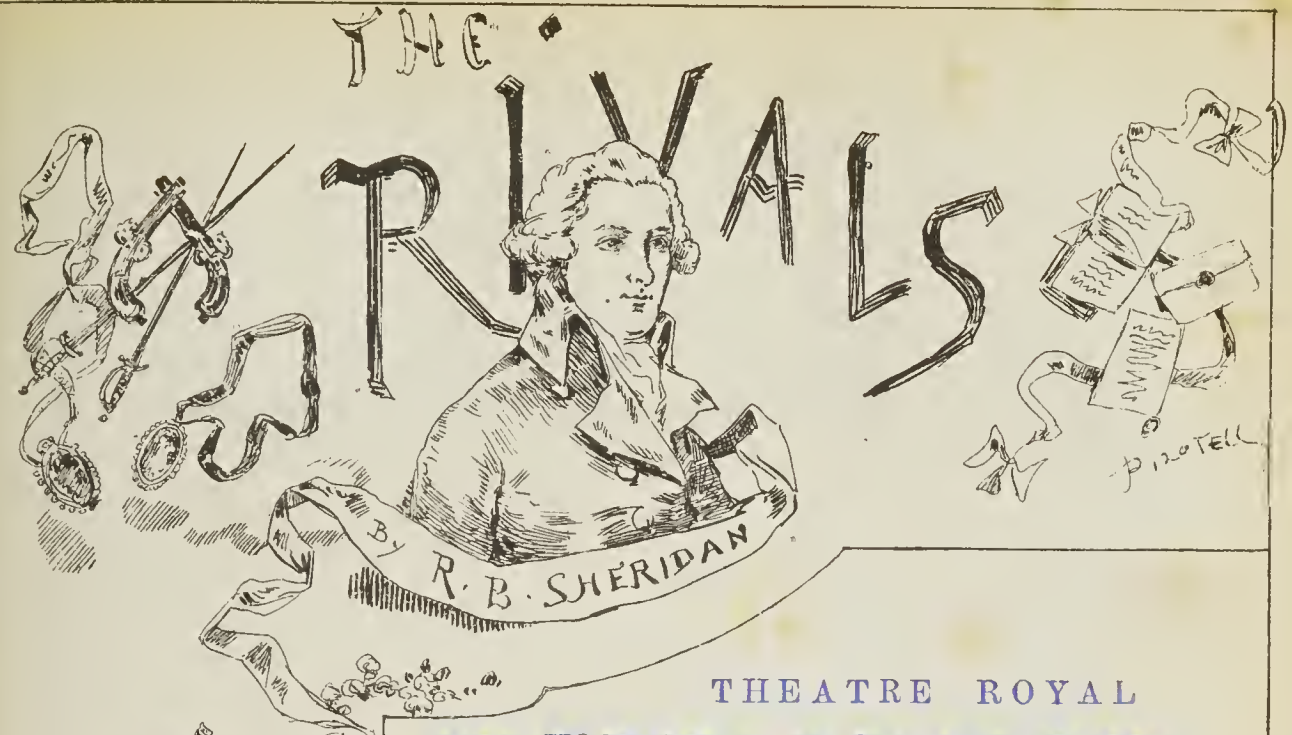
WAR has broken out between M. Sardou and Mr. Savile Rowe. "The system of trafficking in French plays," writes the latter to a New York paper, "has received rather a rude shock. Some misguided people have evidently informed the French authors that their plays are worth their weight in gold in this country, and have persuaded them that every manager in London is prepared to pay thousands of pounds to any one in France who will condescend to write for the English stage. This false intelligence has induced the French authors to ride the high horse, to ask extravagant sums for material which, nine cases out of ten, is worthless, and to make absurd stipulations concerning the handling and manipulation of their literary children. For my own part I never saw a French play in my life that was valuable for the English-speaking races, without considerable alteration. M. Sardou is particularly angry because *Diplomacy* has succeeded. This success altogether contradicts the Sardou theory, for if *Dora* had been acted in England as it was written in France, I will undertake to say that it would not have run a month. Well, the new and spirited management of the Adelphi heard, through M. Sardou's agents, that he had a magnificent drama ready. Negotiations were opened for obtaining this work; Sardou consented to part with it for a handsome sum of money and a guarantee that the English adaptors would submit their alterations—if any—to him; a splendid cast was engaged, consisting of Hermann Vezin, Harry Neville, Lydia Foote, and others, and when the manuscript came over it was submitted to the gentlemen who, according to M. Sardou, have spoiled *Dora* by making it *Diplomacy*. But those gentlemen, fearless of the dreadful consequences, have, I believe, reported that the new drama is altogether unsuited to the Adelphi stage, that it is in their opinion not worth the cost of expensive mounting, and that it had better go back to M. Sardou."

A LIFE ban hangs over a poor Chinese actor named Yang Yeh-lin, who, like the peasant boy of Lyons, loved above his station, and married the daughter of a Shanghai mandarin some years ago. Less fortunate than Claude, he was subjected to inhuman torture when the mesalliance was discovered, and was set free only when at almost the last extremity. A week or two ago he revisited the scene of his former sufferings and advertised his willingness to accept an engagement to perform at one of the native theatres. This coming to the knowledge of the authorities, he was again seized and thrown into prison. It is said that a foreigner, commiserating his position, managed, by becoming security, to procure his release, but only on the understanding that he would never be permitted to pursue his calling in Shanghai, and that he should instantly depart.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

WITH every disposition to recognize the excellence of the intention at Drury Lane in introducing to us for the first time within recent years Shakspere's delightful *Winter's Tale*, it is difficult for the most kindly-disposed critic to say very much in favour of the manner in which the apparent purpose of the management has been executed. Although we have been crying out so long for the production of classical plays that it seems almost ungrateful not to appreciate the effort when it is made, the fact must be confessed that profound disappointment is the chief impression created by the performance at Drury Lane of what Hazlitt declared to be "one of the best acting of Shakspere's plays." When it has been said that the scenery is suitable, and does the greatest credit to the artistic sense of Mr. W. Beverley, and that Mrs. Hermann Vezin makes an admirable Paulina, the only unstinted praise which is deserved has been given, though there is much to commend in the Antigonus of Mr. Ryder. The part of Hermione is scarcely suited to Miss Wallis, but in the statue scene—the most trying, perhaps, in the piece—she played with exquisite skill and feeling. The chief defect of the impersonation, it seems to us, is a want of colour; but if only by reason of this deficiency the Hermione of Miss Wallis is decidedly preferable to the Leontes of Mr. Charles Dillon, whose colour is ill-chosen and awkwardly applied. The substitution of Mr. Ryder for Mr. Dillon in this necessarily prominent part would, it seems to us, have been a great addition of strength to the cast. The main personages of the drama are, as they are represented at Drury Lane, completely overshadowed by Mrs. Hermann Vezin, whose Paulina stands out from its surroundings no less by reason of its dramatic grip of character than by its cultivated elevation. In most of the other performers the chief characteristic observable is perhaps the manner in which they find themselves tramelled by blank verse. They seem to be obviously moving in fetters the moment they are not allowed to speak the phrases of everyday life, and they are either ludicrously stilted and unnatural, or else rush to the opposite extreme of giving a commonplace burlesque of the poetry which they are asked to repeat. Considerations of this kind apart, it may be noted that Mr. E. Compton and Miss Fowler give a graceful, if somewhat weak, rendering of the charming episode of the loves of Perdita and Florizel, that both the Clown and the pedlar Autolycus lose much of their rich comedy flavour, and that many of the performers were, not without reason, held unworthy of being entrusted



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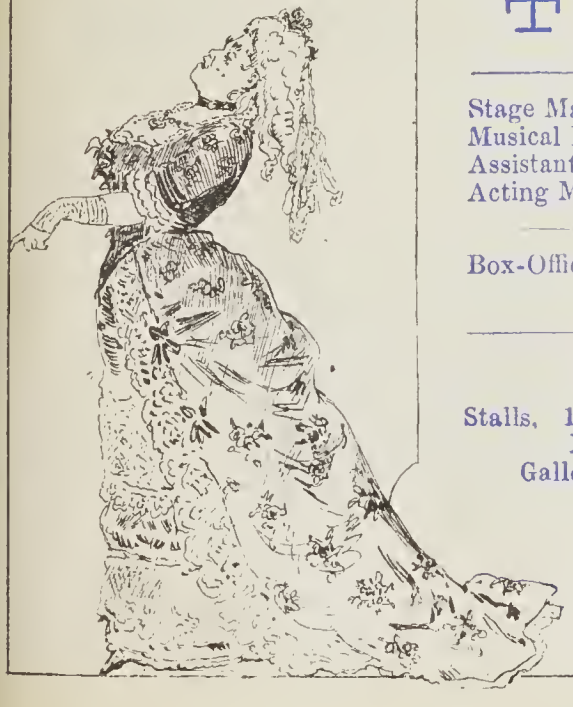

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Sir Anthony Absolute	...	... Mr HOWE
Captain Absolute	...	... Mr W. TERRISS
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SCENE - A VILLAGE ON MAY-DAY.

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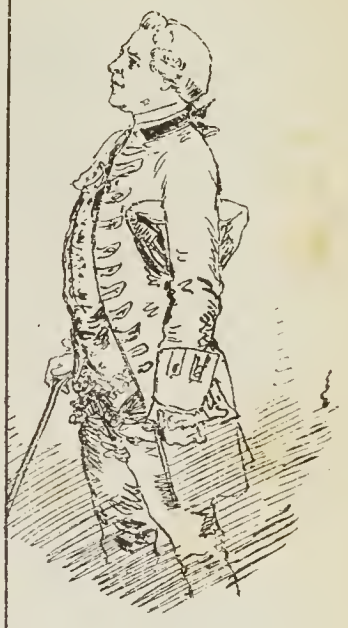

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with the fine speeches placed in the mouths of minor characters, which speeches had accordingly to be cut out. A list of the passages in which Shakspere's words were, on the occasion of our visit, altered, and that, as may be imagined, not for the better, would be a long one; and on the whole the company cannot be said to be equal to its difficult work. *Winter's Tale* at Drury Lane is fairly typical of modern performances of Shakspere, and those who have been satisfied with such efforts before will doubtless be satisfied again. Mr. Chatterton has followed the old lines, and he is perhaps not to be blamed if one of the chief results of his labours is found in the general conviction that some different mode of dealing with Shakspere's dramas on the stage is greatly to be desired.

The representation of *The Rivals* at the Haymarket, which is greatly to be welcomed in place of *Conscience Money*, is of much the same calibre as that of *Winter's Tale* at Drury Lane, though inasmuch as the task attempted is incomparably easier the general result is far more satisfactory. The performance is uneven, and little effort is made to give their due proportions to the component parts of the comedy. We seem to have a great deal too much of the elaboration of Bob Acres's humour and too little of the satirical sketch of the society in which the cowardly blusterer formed so unimportant a member. We are made irritatingly conscious that on the present occasion the "star" is playing the low-comedy character, and that he is supported, as it is called, by the represetatives of Sir Anthony, Captain Absolute, Lydia Languish, and the rest of the *dramatis personæ*. And yet in individual efforts on the part of the actors and actresses at the Haymarket there is much to commend. The Captain Absolute, for example, of Mr. Terriss is manly and marked by much of the freedom of movement required by the dashing young officer, who despite his disobedience has so strong a hold upon his admiring father's love; and there is much that is sound and useful in Mr. Robert Pateman's Sir Lucius O'Trigger and Mr. Howe's Sir Anthony, though the crusty temper of the latter is made a trifle too genial. Miss Emily Thorne gives a needlessly common and commonplace tone to Mrs. Malaprop. Mr. Kelly scarcely seems at home in the ungrateful rôle of Falkland, and neither Miss Carlotta Addison's Julia nor Miss Pateman's Lydia is nearly as clever as is Miss Kate Phillips's Lucy. Mr. J. S. Clarke's Acres is so well-known that it needs little comment. It is a highly-finished piece of caricature, very entertaining, but not always fully justified, to our thinking, in its extravagance. The favour with which *The Rivals* has been received only proves that standard comedy interpreted with anything like due effect is certain of a warm welcome in London.

The season attempted by Miss Agnes Leonard and Mr. W. H. Stephens at the Court Theatre seems to suggest by its dismal results that Mr. Hare is wise to keep away from his theatre, except during the spring and summer seasons. The silly domestic drama *Marie the Pearl of Savoy* was followed up by an equally silly comedy called *Memories*, and the interest aroused by neither play was of a kind

to encourage the débutante and her mentor. If *Marie the Pearl of Savoy* and *Memories* had been much better plays than they were, it may be doubted if they would under the circumstances have ranked as anything but failures; as it was they richly deserved their sad fate. Miss Leonard herself has, perhaps, some reason to complain that her artistic promise, such as it may be, has been somewhat harshly treated, but she has only herself to thank for this result. Assuming the place that she does in a London company she is trying to run before she can walk, and those who do this must not be surprised at the ridicule which their troubles arouse. Mr. Herman Merivale has given to the world one of the very few new pieces of the month in his *Lady of Lyons Married and Settled,* given at the Gaiety with some success in the course of Saturday matinées. The piece, which Mr. Merivale likes, we believe, to see described as a "gaiety," or "comedy-vaudeville," is not to be readily distinguished from the orthodox burlesque or musical skit, except, perhaps, by its lack of animation, and by the scarcity of opportunities for the singing and dancing of a company especially strong in these elements of entertainment of this order. The *Lady of Lyons Married and Settled* is saved by players like Mr. Terry and Miss E. Farren, whose command of popular burlesque is exceptionally strong. It is poorly and somewhat vulgarly written, and neither in wit nor in polish is it worthy of what the author has proved to be his dramatic and literary powers. People do not quarrel, as Mr. Merivale seems to think they do, with a writer of tragedy for attempting less dignified work, but for failing in the attempt. The *Lady of Lyons Married and Settled* has, however, kept the boards for four successive Saturdays, and its author may if he continues his efforts soon catch the trick of conventional, if not of real, burlesque.

A MORE interesting Gaiety production consists of the old farce *Stage Struck,* which made such a hit at the matinées as to have been promoted to the regular evening programme. Its success is owing to the humorous art of Miss Lawler and Mr. Elton as Sally Scraggs and Tommy Tape in their burlesque of the acting, singing, and dancing of professionals and amateurs. The performance is, perhaps, a little over-boisterous, and Miss Lawler makes the common mistake of sometimes over-stepping the line which divides parody from preposterous nonsense; but none the less is her performance, like that of Mr. Elton, full of promise, and thoroughly deserving of the success which it has secured.

AT the Folly Theatre *Stars and Garters* has, after an inglorious career, been withdrawn, and *Tantalus* fills its place. The new piece is an improvement upon the old, and proves to be practically much the same as *A Night of Terror,* which, like *Tantalus,* is taken from *La Boite à Bibi.* The plot is a wild absurdity, and the abilities of Mr. Lionel Brough and Miss Lydia Thompson are wasted upon illustrating its situations; but Mr. W. J. Hill finds in the character of a sentimental locksmith a part in which he can display a good deal of his rich, broad humour. As compared with *Stars and Garters, Tantalus* is a work of art, full of fun, and

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Foxi Fum	Mr. F. DARRELL	Ski Hi ..	Mr WYATT
Paddy Murphy ...		...	Mr SHIEL BARRY
		(His first appearance at this Theatre.)	
Run Phaster	Mr R. DALTON	1st Bearer ...	Mr LEIGH
Ko Ket	Miss EMILY VINING	Sing Smahl	Miss C. GRAHAME

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Mr Beethoven Brown	(a Music Composer)	Mr W. J. HILL
		His original character)
Mr Sophocles Smith	(a Mad Dramatic Author)	Mr F. DARRELL
Sally ...	(Maid-of-all-work)	Miss VIOLET CAMERON

To be followed at 9.15, by A

NIGHT OF TERROR

A Madness in Three Fyttes.

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John ..	... .	Mr LEIGH
James ...	... ...	Mr WYATT
Mr Everett ...	... ...	Mr R. DALTON
Mr Granville ...	... ..	Mr CARLTON
Mr Owen ...	... .	Mr STEPHENS
Mr Crauford ...	... ...	Mr CHESTER
Mrs Merrybird	...	Miss KATHERINE MUNROE
Margharita Vere de Vere	(a young Widow)	Miss VIOLET CAMERON
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Mr Stafford	... (a Midshipman) ..	Miss BARRINGTON

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thoroughly well worth seeing; and on its intrinsic merits it may worthily fill the gap until some suitable new burlesque is unearthed. After Mr. Hill the performer who is seen to most advantage is Miss Annie Poole.

Strand and Olympic are relying for the present on revivals of their most popular recent pieces, and hence it comes to pass that the *Two Orphans* and *Nemesis* have once more taken their places on the bills. *Nemesis*, notwithstanding its clever interpretation by Miss Violet Cameron and Miss Lottie Venne, has sustained in Mr. Terry a loss for which Mr. Loredan, the new Calino, cannot, with the best intentions in the world, make up. It is quite as important that the hero of *Nemesis* should be an amusing actor as it is that he should sing efficiently. The *Two Orphans* still goes admirably, as might be anticipated from the fact that Mr. H. Neville, Mr. W. Rignold, Miss Ernstone, and Mrs. Huntley are at hand to play their old rôles with their well-proven powers of commanding the interest of their audience. Of the new-comers Miss Marion Terry, as the blind girl, and Mr. Macklin are the most successful; whilst Miss Helen Barry and Mr. Archer are also included in what is a company of more than average strength.

Little Cricket, the pleasing idyllic piece borrowed by Mr. James Mortimer from Georges Sand, has now been played at a Haymarket matinée with a result fully confirming the verdict won by the play, and by Miss Cowell's performance of its chief character at the Duke's Theatre. The young actress's illustration of the despised "cricket's" character in each of its phases is full of simple sympathetic charm, and an amount of illusion is secured by her impersonation which, when its by no means easy subject is considered, is very remarkable.

We regret to record the fact that the atmosphere of the Royalty Theatre, where *La Marjolaine* was given last year, has little prospect of purification at any rate during the present management of that house. The new season has been inauspiciously commenced with *La Jolie Parfumeuse*, who has already been appropriately introduced to us at the Alhambra as a heroine whose society, like that of *La Marjolaine*, is unedifying, even where it is not positively repulsive.

IN THE PROVINCES.

From Liverpool Mr. Irving proceeded to Dublin, where the merits of his various impersonations obtained an even more enthusiastic recognition than in 1876 and 1877. His Richelieu and Louis XI. seemed to take our Irish friends by surprise. "The former character, says *Saunders' Daily News*, "is a fine study of the force and vastness of a complete individuality, and affords to the actor a fine opportunity for the exhibition of the resources of histrionic art. But the great Cardinal was no common man, and to show a glimpse of him as he was to the generation of two centuries later needs gifts of no common order. Titanic daring, iron resolution, sublime

self-belief, the wisdom of the serpent, the subtlety and the instinctive understanding of the motives of men which only follow in the wake of personal experience, are some of the component elements of the character of Armand Richelieu; and to reproduce the character in all its majesty, without suffering the more noble qualities to be impaired by the shadow of the less worthy ones, is the task which Mr. Irving undertakes, and in which last night he made so magnificent a success. More than this, he stamped the play with such a supreme realism that it was quite impossible to realize that the whole was but a pageant and the sport of an hour. From the first moment in which he appeared in the doorway of his chamber, clad in loose robes of dull colour, with bent form and haggard features, with the eyes of unquenchable brightness flashing under the snowy silken tresses of old age, he held the audience spell-bound. The fourth act, where the Cardinal protects Julie from the King by the threat of the thunders of the Church, was almost sublime; the indomitable spirit seemed to wake again, the thin, nervous hands whirled aloft in the very ecstasy of conscious power. Under the cavernous eyebrows the old eyes flashed dark lightnings, and the quailing of the King's messengers seemed no stage play, but a grim reality. "The general satisfaction so warmly evinced throughout," says the *Irish Times*, "affords proof that rant and roar and strut are not the qualities by which is compelled the approbation of a Dublin audience. The performance, as far as the principal personage was concerned, was quiet and subdued, but full of force, power, and impressiveness. Every minute detail, from the comparatively trifling episode where he examines Huguet's arquebus to the moment where he falls, pallid, shrinking, helpless, into his chair, at the commencement of the last scene, was most delicately elaborated. His manner with Julie was most gentle and tender; his comedy refined and subtle; his bursts of pathos and anger truly vivid and eloquent." Then the *Freeman's Journal* says: "Like all that Mr. Irving does, it was art of the highest kind, and whatever is said of it must be reverently spoken. The part was lovingly and laboriously built together, it was crowded with surprises and beauties, it had its share of noble pathos and of fine frenzy, touched here and there with that mystic eerieness which Mr. Irving has made his own." Not less hearty was the praise awarded to the actor's Louis XI. "Mr. Charles Kean," says the *Irish Times*, "modelled his performance on that of Ligier, the famous French actor. Mr. Irving has built up, according to his usual methods, with all the earnestness, enthusiasm, and instinctive taste which so distinguish him, a conception for which he is no man's debtor. Even to the author he owes little. There is nothing in the construction or arrangement of the play that calls for eulogy, and the workmanship is not seldom slipshod and slovenly. The blank verse is weak, and not seldom stilted, besides being unrhythmical and halting. This may have been all the better for the actor. He is less embarrassed than he would have been if the character had been strongly marked by the dramatist, and if the lines were notable for vigour and beauty. Having so little to trammel him, he is all the more free to

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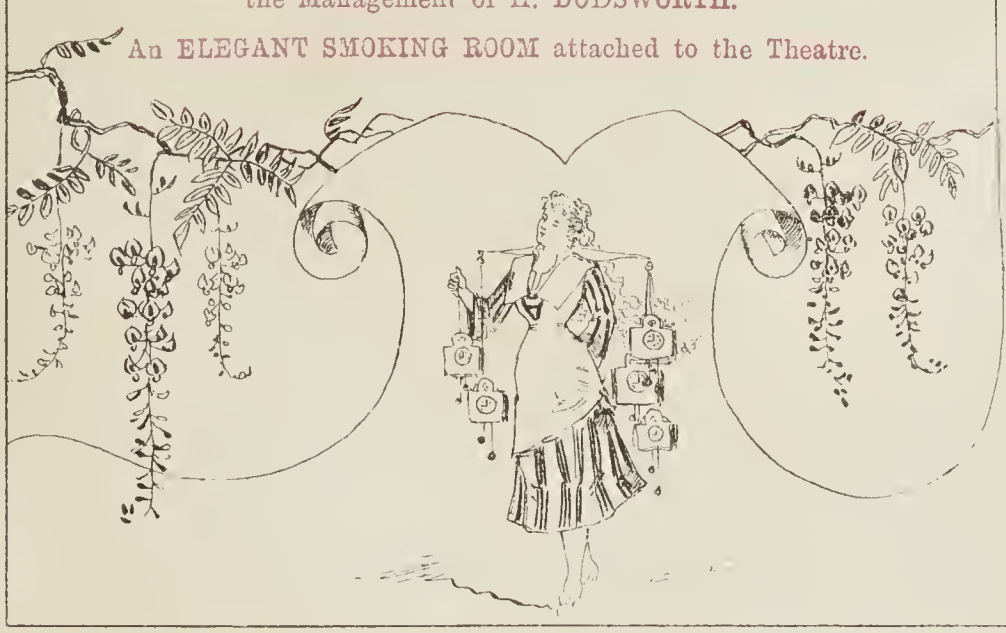

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give reins to his imagination, to think out the idea for himself, and give an individual and an independent reading. This curious, weird, seemingly unkingly king is not without a certain dignity. There is a princely air about him, with all his weakness and abasement. He is not a king of shreds and patches. Even through the simple costume there are occasional gleams of nobility which throw a strange light upon the character of the man—a suggestion of strength in weakness—the lofty air familiar to those born to command. But the actor never dreams of doing so inartistic a thing as to strive for the sympathy of his audience. This is a hateful character, this Louis he has created, and he has no wish to have him otherwise. There is nothing kind, or pleasant, or lovable about him. You may hate or despise, but pity him never. The bedchamber scene was rendered with wonderful power, but it was in the last that the efforts of the great actor culminated. For careful study, close grasp of character, facial expression, and dramatic power, this performance stands at the head of Mr. Irving's impersonations. The house was crowded to suffocation." "Again last evening," says the *Freeman's Journal*, "Mr. Irving splendidly illustrated his mastery of all shades of human passion. His acting was not perfect—his alternations of tone and manner were occasionally almost ludicrously abrupt. But these defects were forgotten in the sombre terror with which he invested the more solemn scenes. At times the weak old man, with leaden images stuck round his hat, with his sunken eyes blazing and his thin, white hands quivering with passion, seemed the living embodiment of some power of evil. But it was only in the last scene that the superb power of the actor was perfectly displayed. If Mr. Irving played no other part than that of the haggard mockery of a King that totters down the stage, and falls muttering inarticulately on the couch, his reputation as a great actor would still be abundantly secured. No one that has not stood by a real bed of death and marked the limbs grow rigid and the eyes dark as the last hour approaches can realise the fearful fidelity of the picture." On the 7th Mr. Irving commenced an engagement of a fortnight at the Theatre Royal, Manchester. During his stay there the critics sensibly altered the tone in which they thought fit last year to speak of his claims. "There is one crucial test of a Hamlet," the *Guardian* remarks, "which Mr. Irving has borne, and that should be accepted as in some degree a measure of success. He has thoroughly individualised the part, and large houses are never wanting to witness and applaud when he forms the central figure of the play. An actor must soar far beyond mediocrity to bear the test of time in this most exacting of all characters. This Mr. Irving has done, and his most adverse critic cannot gainsay his complete success." The *Examiner*, speaking of the tragedian's Richelieu, says:—"There have been actors in some respects more powerful than Mr. Irving who have subordinated to the lofty conception of a mighty and inflexible ruler of the destinies of a nation all those lighter phases of his character which the dramatist supplied. By Mr. Irving's naturalistic method that fault is avoided, and as under the developing solution of his talent the portrait comes forth, we feel that this is no mere creation of the

poet's fancy, and something more than a clever example of the actor's power; but some such a man as Richelieu may well have been only greater in his intellect than, and not different in his species from, his contemporaries. He could love France, as he did with an ardent and self-sacrificing love, and yet find room in his affections for the persecuted Julie. He can keep the whole of the foreign relations of the empire within his ken, and yet, without improbability, turn to banter his faithful attendant, or say kind words to his trusty page. The beauty of Mr. Irving's interpretation is its naturalness and its thorough consistency; but it is no less distinguished by its energy and its exquisite art." In dealing with Mr. Irving's Louis XI., the critics seem to ransack the vocabulary of praise. The *Guardian* describes the performance as "magnificent," and as "one of the most complete and powerful efforts the present generation has seen." "The sole recommendation of the play," says the *Examiner*, "is that it supplies Mr. Irving with a part that, like Mathias and Richelieu, is so exactly adapted to his genius that it might have been written for him. This, however, is due to the fact that in some respects Mr. Irving rises superior to his authors. He has clearly studied not only the drama but the history. He has, perhaps, found that if he loyally followed history he could not faithfully interpret the drama. He has, therefore, it seems to us, preferred to adhere to his text, and to the conception of Louis therein set forth, while adding to the creation of the dramatists such circumstance and detail as, without injuring the harmony, add, as far as may be, to the naturalness of the likeness, and to the rendering of a piece of the finest acting we have seen for a long time. If, despite the intrinsic improbability of this Louis, Mr. Irving yet compels our unfailing attention by his power of interpreting so abhorrent a creature, and if, despite the dismal narrative which gradually unfolds itself, he succeeds in exciting our keen interest in its evolution, it must be admitted that, whether we are satisfied with *this* version of Louis, or whether we are or are not incensed by the poverty of the play, we must at least accord to the actor the honours of a triumph. And such a triumph certainly Mr. Irving won last night. There is a story of a brilliant Scotch anatomist, whose deft and tender handling of the knife in one critical case, moved the students gathered round him into a demonstration of applause. The story recurs to us in this connection, because it seems to supply an explanation of one's feelings as he watches Mr. Irving's acting. One applauds, not because his sympathies are engaged, or because he has a delight in what is passing before him, but rather by reason of the eminent skill with which he sees the operation performed, or, in other words, the character depicted." "Louis XI.," says the *Courier*, is "a part which Mr. Charles Kean in a very remarkable manner identified himself with, and old playgoers will feel that they are conferring no small honour on Mr. Irving when they admit—as they generally will—that the performance of last night, as a whole, is not unworthy to rank alongside of what was generally regarded as the masterpiece of the gifted son of Edmund Kean. The latest Louis XI. forms a picture which, in its almost

luxurious completeness of detail, will never leave the memory of those who have witnessed it. By means which, fortunately for the real art which it displays, it is impossible to particularize, he comes on the stage as the living and apparent embodiment of the aged, crafty, cruel, and superstitious monarch. The extraordinary contrasts which form the most picturesque features in the character of the king, are rendered with what it is no exaggeration to describe as consummate skill. It is only when Mr. Irving occasionally seeks to emphasise these contrasts by violent changes from a high key of voice to a low one, or *vice versa*, that we are disposed to quarrel with the means by which he obtains his dramatic effects. Taken altogether, Louis XI. is certainly one of the most suggestively interesting productions of the modern stage."

Mr. Irving appeared in Manchester under inauspicious circumstances. Not to speak of the agitation which prevailed in the city on account of financial troubles, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal were playing at the Prince's in *Diplomacy*, and Mr. Barry Sullivan, who at the commencement of the month was at Sheffield, fulfilled an engagement at the Queen's. "We may confess," writes the *Examiner*, "to having had a doubt, after an acquaintance with Mr. Kendal in a fairly comprehensive *répertoire*, whether he would succeed in exhibiting the highly-pitched emotions of the impulsive young *attaché*; but the doubt was unjust. He has now shown that he can rise into higher regions of dramatic expression, and pourtray to us in a series of finished studies—though there is no suggestion of study at the moment, so spontaneous and natural seems the delivery—how supreme confidence gives place to an agonising doubt, and that to a terrible conviction of the guilt of her he loved and trusted. Nor was Mrs. Kendal less successful than her husband. Unaffected in her simplicity and artlessness in the earlier passages, and as prettily affectionate as becomes maidenly modesty when she responds to the ardent professions of Beauclerc, she rises to a tragic power when the husband of an hour assails her honour and denies her truth, and leaves her, as she thinks, for ever. There were two passages in which both Mr. and Mrs. Kendal astonished us by the exhibition of power of an order such as we should scarcely have thought, with all our appreciation of them, that either had attained, and both were in the painful scene in which the husband, compelled to believe his wife a traitress, asks her to confess her guilt and beseeches her to offer an excuse for it. The Comtesse Zicka of Miss Kate Pattison is as admirable a figure in its subordinate relationship as Dora herself." Mr. and Mrs. Kendal went from Manchester to Liverpool. In addition to Richard III. and Hamlet, Mr. Sullivan appeared with considerable success as King Lear, a character he has not undertaken for some time. Mr. Irving was preceded at the Theatre Royal by Mr. Sothern, whose visits to Manchester are events to be marked with a white stone. The *Guardian* contended that a change of his now well-known programme was necessary. Mr. Sothern subsequently visited Newcastle, Leicester, Preston, Leeds, and Brighton.

Mr. Toole began the month at Liverpool, afterwards going to Warrington, Birkenhead, and Southport. Here is a fair specimen

of the welcome he receives from the public journals :—" Mr. Toole has come, and with him fun and frolic, gaiety and grimaces. His mission is to make people laugh, and right faithfully does he fulfil his mission. It is not possible to feel despondent in his presence. While under his spell people laugh, they know not why and care not wherefore. It is possible he imparts no great moral lessons, develops no system of philosophy, or stimulates no unhealthy excitement. But he pleases and amuses, rouses the spirits, and dispels the blues, and makes the dullest man cheer and the saddest laugh. Those who call that nothing have still some philosophy to learn." Mr. Billington played in the North, and Miss Bateman in the West. Miss Carlotta Leclerq, during an engagement at Exeter, produced a domestic drama called *Noblesse Oblige*, which was well received.

IN PARIS.

The most important event of the last month was the production at the Opera House of M. Gounod's *Polyeucte*, composed in London between six and seven years ago. The groundwork of the opera, as may be inferred from its title, is supplied by Corneille's tragedy of the same name, which in turn was based upon the well-known Christian legend. Notwithstanding the reputation which Corneille had won by the *Cid* and other plays, the actors at first refused to play *Polyeucte*, and there is a story to the effect that the manuscript remained untouched for nearly two years in the house of an actor to whom the author had sent it. Thanks, however, to the influence of Richelieu, it was eventually brought out at the Hotel de Bourgogne in 1640, and for nearly two hundred years had a place in the repertoire of the chief Parisian theatre. The characters of Sévère and Pauline are perhaps two of the most beautiful which old French tragedy can exhibit. Donizetti has already used the play for operatic purposes in his *Poliuto*; but apart from the Credo—a gem in its way—the work has added little or nothing to his reputation. M. Gounod's, it is to be feared, will disappoint expectation. The score, it need hardly be said, abounds in striking passages. The orchestration, like that of his other efforts, is generally fine, and at times, as in the duet between Sévère and Pauline in the second act, " Un père, dites-vous, abusant de ses droits," rises fully to the level of his powers. But, regarded as a whole, the opera is sadly unequal; indeed, some of the music is quite unworthy of the composer. In treating such a theme a man of the morbidly religious temperament of M. Gounod could not but find a congenial element, and it may be said that, except as regards the figure of Polyeucte, he felicitously preserves the spirit of the ancient legend which Corneille so reverently followed. The only singers who appear to considerable advantage in the piece are Mdlle. Krauss and M. Lassalle, who respectively play Pauline and Sévère. The others were beneath criticism, including the representative of Polyeucte himself. The new opera was luxuriously put upon the stage, and will probably remain in the *affiches* for some time.

The Marquis d'Ivry's long-expected opera, *Les Amants de Vérone,* has at last been produced at the Salle Ventadour. Twelve years ago it was submitted to the manager of the old Theatre Lyrique, and would probably have been accepted if M. Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* had not already been sent in. Two years afterwards it was privately performed with marked success, but since then has been kept in its portfolio. Every attempt to play it was defeated by the bankruptcy into which the managers of the theatre successively fell, and M. Capoul, who was greatly pleased with the part of Romeo, undertook the responsibilities of management for the sole purpose of bringing it out. That his enterprise will be rewarded with success there can be no doubt. The score of *Les Amants de Vérone,* though not equal in strength and originality to *Romeo et Juliette,* and even one or two of the operas founded on the story, is generally very pleasing, and the fervid tenderness which pervades the balcony scene is well preserved. In one respect the composer has gained an advantage over all his predecessors. He has had the courage to follow Shakspere's text, adopting at the end, however, the arrangement by which Juliet awakes before Romeo dies. The scene between the ill-starred pair at the tomb is marked by much force and feeling. The performances call for high praise. M. Capoul not only looked the part of Romeo, but sang and acted with fire and dramatic effect. The duel scene was so admirably represented that for some minutes after Tybalt fell the business of the stage was interrupted by applause. Mdlle. Heilbronn was an ideal Juliet,—pretty, tender, and impassioned; and all the other parts were adequately filled. *Les Amants de Vérone,* we repeat, is unequivocally successful.

The other events of the month need not detain us long. *La Dame aux Camelias* has been revived at the Gymnase, Mdlle. Tessandier appearing as Marguerite, and M. Guitry, the Conservatoire student, who entered into an engagement at the theatre without the knowledge of the authorities, as Armand. The former created a deep impression, but it was only in the scene with Marguerite in the fourth act that M. Guitry satisfied expectation. Madame Regnier, the physician's wife, has brought out at the Vaudeville a little piece entitled *Les Rieuses,* so called because it introduces three distinct types of laughing personages to the audience. The plot turns upon the dismay of a husband who has followed a supposed member of the *demi-monde* to her house, and on entering her room finds her talking to his wife. It is upon her dialogue that Madame Regnier chiefly relies. M. D'Hervilly has reconstructed for the Odéon his comedy *La Belle Saïnara,* produced at the same theatre in 1876. It is now called *La Fontaine des Beni-Medad.* and the scene is laid in Africa, instead of, as formerly, in Egypt, Sidi Mahommed, a citizen of Algiers, advises his wife, of whom he is jealous, to repair to the fountain mentioned and consult the Negress Oneida, his intention being to disguise himself as the latter, and receive the confession himself. Fatima, discovering the *ruse,* goes to the fountain, and the husband is maddened by an avowal which, with all his doubts of her fidelity, he had never expected. In the end, of course, he is made happy. The Ambigu Comique

has passed into the hands of M. Chabrillat, the journalist, who, after redecorating the interior of the house, commenced his campaign with a revival of *La Jeunesse de Louis XIV.*

IN BERLIN.

The Royal Playhouse, after having devoted the first month of the season to pieces belonging to the regular repertory, gave a comparative novelty on the 21st September, by reviving, for the first time since 1864, *Das Leben ein Traum*, a German version of Calderon's *La Vida es sueño*, a noble play which has suffered greatly in the process of adaptation to the German stage, Herr West, the author of the version played here, having taken many unwise liberties with the original. The performance dragged somewhat, the time being throughout too slow. The wild passion of Sigismund was beyond the means of Herr Ludwig, who was more at home in representing the melancholy which overtakes the hero in the latter part of the piece. Fräulein Haverland vainly sought by violence of utterance to indicate the deep passion of Rosaura thirsting for vengeance in her unrequited love. One of the best features of the performance was Herr Kahle's Clarin, that semi-tragic "gracioso." Herr Berndal as the King, and Herr Klein as Clotald, were also satisfactory. If the romantic conceptions of the old Spanish poet made a severe strain upon the resources of the company of the Royal Playhouse, they proved quite equal to the interpretation of Herr Wilhelm Jordan's graceful three-act comedy, *Durch's Ohr*, which was produced a week afterwards for the first time at the leading theatre, and was so well received that we may safely predict that it will maintain its place in the repertory, to which it has been promoted more than twenty years after its first production. The plot has little originality, turning, as it does, upon the loves of a sentimental and a humorous couple, and an eccentric will which contains matrimonial conditions such as stage testators are fond of imposing in all countries. The literary merits of the comedy, which is written in graceful verse, and the happy blending of humour and sentiment, atone for the lack of novelty in the story; and full justice was done to the good qualities of the play by the admirable acting of Fräulein Kessler and Herr Berndal, as the humorous lovers, and Fräulein Meyer and Herr Ludwig as the sentimental couple. The performance ended with a festal ballet by Paul Taglioni, entitled *Ein glückliches Ereigniss* ("A Happy Event"), produced apropos of the union of Prince Henry of the Netherlands with Princess Mary of Prussia. During the period comprised in our present notice, two evenings were devoted to Shakspere, his *Richard III.* and *Romeo and Juliet* being the plays selected, and the German classical drama was represented by Goethe's *Faust* and Schiller's *Maria Stuart.*

At the Residenz Theater, *Die Kammerzofe* (Paul Ferrier's *Femme de Chambre*) proved as successful as we had expected, and maintained its place in the bills till the 8th October, when it was

replaced by *Die arme Löwin*, a translation by Herr Paul Lindau, a dramatist of grown reputation, of M. Emile Augier's celebrated play, *Les Lionnes Pauvres*. The recent refusal to allow the performance of an English version of the piece at a London theatre imparts special interest to the following observations of a distinguished German critic :—"Augier lashes with the seriousness and severity of a born moral censor and satirist those frivolous and immoral women who, from love of immoderate luxury, wreck their married life in a kind of mania for fashionable dissipation, sell their own and their husbands' honour, and, hurried on as it were by a demoniacal power, end in an abyss of shame and misery. The delineation of Seraphine is a masterpiece in every feature, and especially in this, that the dramatist does not lend the guilty woman the halo of a penitent Magdalen. On the evening of the very day when her utter worthlessness is disclosed, and her noble-hearted husband repudiates her for ever, she sits in brilliant attire in a box at the theatre. This type is drawn in a manner not unworthy of the art of Molière, being true to life in Berlin as well as in Paris. A plague-spot of modern society is here in truth touched. *Discite moniti.*" The only point to which the critic objects is, that Seraphine's guilty lover escapes scot-free. The piece was fairly acted by a company well trained in the interpretation of modern French works. Fräulein Castelli was graceful, but weak in the leading part. Frau Claar-Delia was effective as the virtuous wife, but did not sufficiently restrain her powers of passionate expression. Herren Patonay and Keppler were respectively a tolerable Pommeau and an admirable Bordognon.

The Wallner Theater, which was unfortunate in the opening programmes of the present season, at last scored a decided success on the 22nd September by the production of a new "Volkstück" by Herren Julius Stinde and Georg Engels, entitled *Ihre Familie*, which bears a suspicious resemblance to Robertson's *Caste*. We find in it the same aristocratic mother, whose son falls in love with and marries a ballet-girl; the same drunken old father, whose Radical principles here acquire a strongly socialistic tinge; the same lively and humorous sister, who consoles the young wife during her supposed widowhood; the same steady working man, who is in love with the lively sister,—in short, we have everything but the delicacy of Tom Robertson's genial dialogue. The piece is well acted, especially by Fräulein Ernestine Wegener, in the part associated with Mrs. Bancroft's name.

The other theatres need not detain us long. The National Theater continues the ambitious course upon which it entered at the opening of the season, and has given performances of Shakspere's *Othello* and *King Lear*, Schiller's *Maria Stuart* and *Wilhelm Tell*, Lindner's *Bluthochzeit*, Freytag's *Journalisten*, &c. The simple humour of Fritz Reuter's comedy, *Die drei Langhälse*, which attained but a *succès d'estime* on its original production at the Wallner Theater, has found favour with the frequenters of the Belle Alliance Theater. Space forbids us to speak of the operatic performances of the month beyond stating that the Italian opera

season has begun at Kroll's Theater, and that the Royal Opera gave, on the 11th ult., as the first novelty of the season, Herr Abert's *Ekkehard*.

IN VIENNA.

At the Burgtheater, Herr Paul Lindau's *Johannistrieb*, the first performance of which took place too late for notice in our last number, met with a very favourable reception from the public, but has been less kindly treated by the critics. Its principal defects are that the comic scenes are but slightly connected with the serious subject of the play, and that a plot which barely suffices for three acts is expanded into four. The story is that of a Professor who, after having secretly exchanged vows with a young girl, sets out on a botanical expedition to Central Africa, whence tidings of his death soon arrive. Having mourned for a year, his beloved marries, and in another year dies in giving birth to a daughter. Saddened by the news of his Louisa's inconstancy, Harold wanders about for many years, and returning home a middle-aged man, he finds another Louisa, the daughter and very image of his old love. He falls in love with this young lady, and, being a botanist, he compares this second outburst of the gentle passion in his mature breast to that second growth of foliage which often takes place about St. John's Day, when frost has nipped the buds in spring, and hence the title of the play, *Johannistrieb* being a word used to indicate that second growth. The comic scenes take place in an artist's studio, where Louisa sits for her portrait, and introduce us to two painters of effectively contrasted characters, the kind but sarcastic Köbke and the mendacious, foppish Jordan, whose love passages—the one with a little girl of the *ingénue* type, and the other with a talkative, pleasure-hunting widow—are very diverting. The acting was worthy of the leading theatre. Herr Sonnenthal by his finished acting made Harold endurable, and Fräulein Janisch played Louisa in her most graceful and tenderest manner. The two painters found most effective representatives in Herren Hartmann and Mitterwurzer. Frau Gabillon played the widow with immense spirit and vivacity, and Herr Gabillon gave a fine piece of character-acting in the slight part of a reduced painter who sits as a model. With the exception of the *Johannistrieb*, which is being repeated twice a week, the Burgtheater has produced no novelties since our last. In turning over the bills of the month, we find one devoted to Shakspere's *Julius Cæsar*, and another to his *Winter's Tale*, while important revivals of *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra* are in preparation.

The Stadttheater has offered several novelties to its frequenters. First in the list comes a new five-act tragedy by Herr Martin Greif, entitled *Marino Falieri*, in which the character of the Doge is ably drawn, the mingled motives of patriotism and wounded vanity which impelled him into the fatal conspiracy being finely indicated. But in the effort to impart to his new work a variety of action which was found wanting in his earlier plays, the author has intro-

duced too many subordinate characters, who unnecessarily impede the progress of the plot. Herr Lobe played the title part with remarkable ability, and the tragedy was favourably received and repeated several times. The second novelty was a curious comedy by Herr Adolph Wilbrandt, entitled *Der Thurm in der Stadtmauer*, and produced on the 3rd ult. with great success. Edward, the hero, is a young man in whose breast dwell a good and an evil nature, and in his struggle against the latter he is encouraged by a young widow whom he loves and ultimately deserves, after having several times succumbed to the evil principle within him. The most successful character in the comedy is one Müller Efendi, who adopts that Turkish name on his return from a successful pursuit of fortune in Constantinople, and who, though he has only one wife, says he has married two women in that one, and calls her Hildegard when she is in good humour, and Hortensia when, as is too frequently the case, her ill-temper gets the upper hand. Like the hero, this lady can say of herself in the language of Goethe's *Faust: Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach! in meiner Brust*, and like the hero she ultimately vanquishes her evil nature, thus making her pseudo-Turkish husband happy ever afterwards. Frau Wilbrandt-Baudius, the author's wife, played the widow in her most charming style, and was enthusiastically applauded on this her first appearance at the Stadttheater. Herr Kadelburg played the hero with effective warmth, but his appearance lacks distinction, and his tailor and coiffeur seem to have conspired to render this defect more evident. Herr Buckovics made a great hit as the pseudo-Turk, and Herr Tyrolt was amusing in the part of an old servant full of wise saws, while Fräulein Weisse and Marberg delighted the eye in two parts which gave little scope for acting. A second play of Herr Wilbrandt's, new to Vienna, was produced on the 12th ult. with success. *Auf den Brettern*, as its title indicates, is a story of stage life, which we fully noticed on the occasion of its first production in Berlin. Suffice it, therefore, to say that Frau Baudius sustained her original part with marked success, and was well supported by Herren Buckovics, Tyrolt, and Grün.

At the Carl Theater, *Die Kammerjungfer*, a German version of M. Paul Ferrier's *Femme de Chambre*, was produced on the 21st Sept., and filled the house for several evenings with a laughing audience, Herr Tewele being quite in his element in M. St. Germain's part of the frail husband. This lively piece was replaced on the 3rd ult. by an entertainment, entitled *Historischer Wiener Possenabend*, being a series of sketches by Herr Anton Langer, introducing the principal farcial types which have appeared on the Vienna stage from the beginning of last century to the present time. This interesting production only held the stage for four nights, and on the 12th ult., after a few evenings devoted to opera bouffe, Herr Tewele scored his first striking managerial success by the production of a German version of the naughty *Niniche* of Messrs. Hennequin and Millaud. Herren Knaack, Tewele, and Blasel vied with the original Paris representatives of the leading male parts, and freely abandoned themselves to the mad mirth of the extravagant situations, exciting a long-continued roar of laughter. Madame

Judic's part was played by Fräulein Zampa, a young lady who looked so well in the *risqué* costumes of the rôle that she found favour in the eyes of the audience before whom this was her first appearance, nor was her acting undeserving of applause.

Of the other theatres we need only say that at the Theater an der Wien *Les Cloches de Corneville,* though coldly treated by the critics, has found favour with the people, that the Komische Oper has sought to avert the ill-luck which has hitherto attended it by changing its name to the Ringtheater, and opened with a "Volkstück" by Herr Anzengruber, entitled *Alte Wiener,* which seems to have proved attractive.

IN ROME AND MILAN.

Towards the end of September the hearts of Roman playgoers were gladdened by the arrival at the Valle Theatre of Signor Monti's dramatic company, which, if it contains no stars of great magnitude, is composed of efficient artistes, who surpass some of the more famous Italian companies in the all-round excellence of their performances. The first novelty produced by Signor Monti was from the pen of Signor Giordano, already known as the author of a successful comedy, entitled *Severità e debolezza.* The new work, which is a drama in four acts, bears the title of *La Duchessa d'Ebro.* It turns upon the favourite theme of the modern French drama, and in addition to the familiar figures of the adulterous wife, and the son who, when told of his mother's shame, challenges her accuser, and falls a victim to the noble feeling which impelled him to vindicate her honour, the Italian dramatist presents us with the odious picture of a youth who, having loved the mother, aspires to the daughter's hand. Signor Giordano lacks the skill required to make such a subject acceptable to the public, and so crude was his treatment of some of the more ticklish situations that the audience began to express disapprobation at an early stage of the performance, and loudly condemned the play at the end. This result was a sad disappointment to many whose hopes had been raised by the success of the author's first piece. An Italian version of M. Emile Augier's latest comedy, *Les Fourchambault,* was fortunately in rehearsal, and was soon afterwards produced with such success that it may be said that Rome has reversed the adverse judgment passed upon the piece by Milan and Venice. The scene in the second act between Bernard and his mother, that between the brothers in the last act, and the charming scene in which Bernard and Marie Letellier dissuade Blanche from a mercenary marriage and plead the cause of love, produced almost as much effect as they have done during the long run of the piece at the Comédie Française, though the acting of the Monti Company was not up to the high level of the great Paris theatre. Signor Monti, in M. Got's part of Bernard, marred an otherwise good performance by a too pulpit-like delivery. Signora Zerri-Grassi, on the other hand, was a very effective Marie, and Signora Tamberlani displayed much feeling in the part of

Madame Bernard. The other parts were adequately played, save that Signor Bertini treated the part of Rastiboulois, the prefect, in a too farcical spirit. Within a fortnight the *Fourchambault* was repeated eight times—a remarkable success at a theatre where the programme is usually changed every evening. This gave Signor Monti such faith in Augier's name that he produced under the title of *Gli sfrontati* an Italian version of that dramatist's *Effrontés,* a work which had little success in France, and was coldly received by the frequenters of the Valle Theatre. The success of *Les Fourchambault* has since been almost thrown into the shade by that of such an old work as Beaumarchais' *Mariage de Figaro,* now acted for the first time in Rome on the occasion of Signora Zerri-Grassi's benefit, the fair *bénéficiaire* in particular gaining great applause by her acting of the part of Susanne.

Of the other Roman theatres, the Argentina opened early in October with *Salvator Rosa*, an opera in four acts by the Brazilian composer, Gomes, whose *Guarany* gained him a high reputation some years ago. Originally produced at Genoa in 1874, and since performed in many Italian towns with varying success, *Salvator Rosa* was quite new to Rome. The first three acts met with a quiet reception, but the fourth excited a *furore,* partly on account of its musical excellence and partly on account of the dramatic power displayed by Signor Rossetti, the tenor singer. The libretto unfortunately bears a strong resemblance to that of *Masaniello,* and this led the critics into comparisons between Auber's treatment of the theme and that of Signor Gomes which were not favourable to the latter, and in spite of the success of the first performance, the Brazilian composer's opera has since failed to draw good houses. At the Teatro Capranica, a new company have produced Cimarosa's *Matrimonio Segreto,* a charming opera, which has attracted fair houses in spite of the inefficiency of most of the singers. The Neapolitan company at the Manzoni produced towards the end of their season another opera of Signor Sarria, new to Rome, entitled *Gli Equivoci.* It found more favour than the *Campana dell' Eremitaggio,* and contains some numbers of real beauty.

In Milan, the Bellotti-Bon company No. 2 opened their season at the Manzoni Theatre with Signor Paolo Ferrari's *Due Dame,* in which they had to sustain unfavourable comparisons with the original cast of the play. They were happier in *La Sfinge* (Le Sphinx), in which Signora Marchi produced strong effects *à la* Croizette. The only novelty yet produced by them is *La Posta in quarta Pagine* (*Les Petites Correspondances* of Messrs. Hennequin and Najac), the loose morality of which excited noisy protests. At the Dal Verme Theatre, an opera entitled *Consalvo,* by a young composer named Italo Azzoni, was favourably received, though but feebly interpreted. Another company now occupy the house, and are giving Ponchielli's *Promessi Sposi* in a superior manner.

IN MADRID.

The long theatrical recess came to an end during the last ten days of September. The Teatro de la Comedia was the first of the

leading theatres to inaugurate the 1878-9 season, and all the other theatres quickly followed suit. The Teatro Español usually selects for its opening programme a work of one of the old Spanish dramatists, a custom to which it laudably adhered on this occasion, giving Alarcon's *El semejante á si mismo,* compressed and adapted to the modern stage by the experienced pen of Señor Ayala, himself a dramatist of repute, and the author of such successful plays as *El tanto por ciento* and *Consuelo.* It may not be amiss to remind our readers that Alarcon flourished in the golden age of Spanish literature, and that his ingenious comedy, *La verdad sospechosa,* was the work upon which Corneille founded his *Menteur* and Foote his *Liar.* Señor Ayala has done his work of adaptation with much taste and judgment, and *El semejante á si mismo,* thus modified, is likely to hold its place in the repertory of the Teatro Español. The comedy was admirably acted by Señora Elisa Mendoza Tenorio, and Señores Rafael Calvo, Fernandez, and Jimenez, and was very well received by a large and fashionable audience. An equally large and brilliant audience was attracted to the house on the 2nd of October to witness the first performance of a new comedy in three acts by Señor Cavestany, a quite young man, who suddenly found himself famous last season on the production of his drama, entitled *El esclavo de su culpa,* a work of considerable merit and of still greater promise. The youthful Cavestany was lauded as a worthy disciple of Alarcon and Moreto, and optimists indulged freely in dreams of a revival of the glories of Spanish dramatic literature. These roseate hopes have been sadly dissipated by the young writer's second effort, which is entitled *Grandezas humanas,* and is a commonplace production. The plot may be briefly stated. A father determines to marry his daughter to an elderly banker, although she has given her heart to a young engineer, who is seeking his fortune in America. The girl's mother and grandfather oppose the marriage, and the latter raises her hopes by promising to prevent the hated union, and by telling her that her lover has sent him a considerable sum of money to hold in trust for him till he can come and claim the object of his love. Nevertheless the marriage takes place, but at the wedding banquet the banker, who had by certain Bourse frauds brought himself within the jurisdiction of the criminal courts, is apprehended, and the father, who had hoped to satisfy some large and pressing debts with the banker's money, finds that he has sacrificed his daughter in vain. His creditors threaten to throw him into prison, but his debts are ultimately paid by the young engineer, who is in the end united to his beloved, the fraudulent banker having put himself out of the way by suicide. The characters are all faint sketches, devoid of individuality, and the dramatist places in the mouth of each and all of them tedious discourses on the vanity and instability of human greatness, which so wearied a friendly audience that the *claque* had some difficulty at the end of the performance in silencing the expressions of disapprobation.

The Teatro de la Comedia inaugurated its season with a few performances of the *Escuela del Matrimonio* of Breton de los Herreros, a somewhat antiquated comedy and one hardly worthy

of the pen which produced *Marcela* and *Muérete y verás*. It nevertheless attracted good houses, as it was well played, such favourites as Señoras Maria Tubau, Lola Fernandez, and Valverde, and Señores Mario and Zamacois being in the cast; and it held its place in the bills till the anniversary of the death of Narciso Serra, when that deeply-regretted dramatist's *Don Tomás* was revived. On the 2nd of October, the great Ristori began a series of performances of Italian tragedy at the Teatro de Apolo with *Medea*. On subsequent evenings she played the leading parts in an Italian version of Schiller's *Maria Stuart*, in *Judit*, in Giacometti's *Maria Antonietta* and *Elisabetta d'Inghilterra*, and other pieces with which her name is associated; but the great *tragédienne* played to steadily declining audiences, and presented the sad spectacle of decaying powers. The opera season opened at the Teatro Real early in October with a fine performance of *Rigoletto*, in which Signora Vitali made a successful first appearance here, and Elena Sanz, Pandolfini, and Gayarre filled the other leading parts. At the Teatro de la Zarzuela, an operetta by Señores Caballero and Casares, with an amusing libretto by Señor Alvarez, has met with some success; and the ubiquitous *Cloches de Corneville* and *Petit Duc* have found much favour at the Alhambra, where they have been interpreted by an Italian company in a manner leaving little to be desired.

IN NEW YORK.

In our last number we briefly announced the appearance in this city of Miss Ada Cavendish and Miss Geneviève Ward. The former played for about a fortnight, after which she set out for Canada. Towards the end of September *Henry VIII.* was revived at Booth's Theatre with great splendour, some of the decorations being of the stock of those used at Manchester. Miss Ward, who represented Queen Katharine, laboured under the disadvantage of being compared with Miss Cushman, but has met with warm praise in almost all quarters. The Union-square Theatre is at present relying upon M. Sardou's *Bourgeois de Pontarcy*, adapted by Mr. Cagaman. Mr. Charles Thorne is well placed as Fabrice, and Miss Linda Dietz displays more power as Marcelle than her previous performances had led us to expect. Mr. Boucicault's version of *Clarissa*—which, by the way, bears a suspicious resemblance to one brought out in London thirty years ago—has succeeded so well that, at the end of September, it gave place at Wallack's Theatre to the *School for Scandal*. Miss Rose Eytinge has reappeared at the Broadway Theatre in *A Woman of the People*, a play familiar to English provincial audiences, but not likely, we think, to succeed in America.

Echoes from the Green-Room.

THE preparations for the forthcoming revival at the Lyceum of *Hamlet* are proceeding apace. Ophelia will be represented by Miss Ellen Terry, the King by Mr. Forrester, and Horatio by Mr. Teesdale. If Mr. Phelps or Mr. Walter Lacy could be induced to play Polonius! The decorations, we understand, will be very beautiful, especially in the ghost-scenes.

MR. IRVING has been offered £10,000 to play in New York for a hundred nights, but has thought fit to decline the offer, at least for the present. In a letter to an American friend he sensibly says that "having undertaken the management of the Lyceum Theatre he must remain in London, and that he is not foolish enough to consider his success as certain among a people of whose tastes he knows nothing. In England he does know what he is about."

MR. IRVING and Mr. Barry Sullivan occupied the same hotel during their stay in Manchester, and at a dinner there the health of the latter was voluntarily proposed in graceful terms by the former.

THE Manchester playgoers are perhaps the most apathetic in the country. Mr. Frank Marshall, who was in that city lately, says that instead of bringing water from the north Manchester should turn on a supply of her audiences.

MR. MARSHALL, by the way, is writing a new play for Mr. Irving. The central figure in it is Robert Emmet.

DURING his engagement at Liverpool, Mr. Irving attended by invitation a meeting of the Notes and Queries Society there, and in the course of a discussion as to the character of Macbeth, led off by the Rev. Mr. Binns, defended the views on which he acted in his performance at the Lyceum.

THE Sociétaires of the Comédie Française will play at the Gaiety Theatre for six weeks next June and July. Their *répertoire* is not yet fixed, but will be as various as possible. This will be the first time they have ever come to England in their entirety, and we are officially informed that they will not appear again under the same conditions for ten years.

ON the 4th November a performance of the *Two Roses* will be given at the Theatre Royal, Belfast, in aid of the "Princess Alice Fund." Lord Newry and Captain M'Calmont will be in the cast.

MDLLE. DONADIO goes to the Italian Opera, St. Petersburg, in place of Madame Patti.

DURING his last visit to Paris Mr. Toole went to a theatre and asked whether a seat could be had. "Yes," was the reply; "un fauteuil." "One for Toole," said the comedian to a companion; "think of that!"

MR. GEORGE VINING BOWERS, the comedian, died recently in New York, after a long illness, of consumption. Vining Bowers, as he was

generally called, was born in Philadelphia, April 23, 1835. He was a younger brother of the late Mr. D. P. Bowers, husband of the well-known actress. Vining commenced his theatrical career as call-boy at the old Chestnut-street Theatre, rising through all the intermediate grades to the position of one of the best low comedians in the country. In such parts as Asa Trenchard, Major De Boots, Paul Pry, &c., Mr. Bowers was excellent, and in low comedy parts in the Shaksperean dramas he had few superiors.

Hood's Comic Annual for 1879—the eleventh year of publication—will appear with the November magazines.

We often hear of young men abandoning other professions for the stage, but very rarely of a young man leaving the stage for other professions. An instance of this, however, is afforded at San Francisco, where Mr. Bishop, who played Pistol to the *Henry V.* of Mr. George Rignold at Booth's Theatre, is practising as a surgeon.

A monument has been placed over the grave of Mr. Charles Mathews at Kensal Green. It bears the following inscription :—

Sacred to the Memory of
Charles James Mathews.
Born December 26, 1803; died June 24, 1878,
Aged 74.

"O Bliss! when all in circle drawn about him, heart and ear were fed to hear him. How good! how kind! and he is gone."

The Star Theatre, Blackburn, was totally destroyed by fire on the 29th ult. Whenever a building of this kind is burnt down, it is customary for a local clergyman to attribute the disaster to Providence. This, however, may not be the case on the present occasion, as on the previous afternoon and evening the Star Theatre had been used for religious services. The proprietor, Mr. Mason, was not insured.

M. Paul Stapfer, Professor in the Grenoble Faculty of Letters, is, says the *Academy*, about to publish the first volume of an important work on "Shakspere et l'Antiquité." In it he makes a study of those plays of Shakspere which relate to subjects taken from antiquity; and in the second he will examine the influence of the antique genius on Shakspere.

Mr. Rowe, the Legree in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, at the Princess's Theatre, has favoured a New York paper with his impressions of the Prince and Princess of Wales, who witnessed the performance. The Prince took deep interest in the plantation scene, and the Princess is very pretty. "In fact," Mr. Rowe sums up, "I was very much taken with the whole of the family."

The London correspondent of the *Liverpool Courier* writes :—"There is no doubt that *Diplomacy* at the Prince of Wales is a great success, and there is equally no doubt that the town is still empty. I looked in at the theatre the other night and found precisely 19 persons in the stalls, while the pit was densely crowded. I believe as many people were turned away

from the pit door as would have filled the stalls, yet three parts of the flooring of the theatre was reserved for 19 persons. I suppose it pays."

Our Boys was played for the twelve hundredth time on the 5th October. Mr. James and Mr. Thorne were then at Madrid, the former having been led to take a deep interest in the Alhambra. It is understood that on his return to London he will write a paper on the genius of Lope de Vega and Calderon.

There appears to be some difference of opinion as to the extent of the "reputation" which Mr. Arthur Matthison has already achieved. In one paper he is spoken of as "a well known writer for the theatres." The *Saturday Review*, on the other hand, calls him "a certain Mr. Matthison," and the well-informed *Examiner* frankly avows its ignorance of the fact that he had any growing dramatic reputation at all.

That Mr. Matthison should have betrayed a want of temper in the matter of *A False Step* is by no means surprising. Not long ago he wrote a furious letter to a friend whom he suspected of an intention to slight him. This is how the letter ended: "I am yours neither truly or faithfully, A. Matthison." These words may suggest another reason for the decision at which the Examiner has arrived—a reason he did not like to give.

The Lord Chamberlain has emphatically declined to allow *Niniche* to be played in any form upon the London stage, and Miss Santley is in despair.

Rossini was fond of odd titles for some of his shorter pieces. Among them were:—"Cod Liver Oil Valse," "Convulsive Prelude," "Romantic Hash," "Morning Hygiene Prelude," "Butter," "Radishes," "Pickled Onions," "Anchovies," "An Asthmatic Study," "A Caress to my Wife," and "Requiem for my Mother-in-law."

Madame Roze says the musical instincts of the American people are superior to those of Europeans, owing to the fusion of the races in this country, which combines the elements of all music-loving classes.

Mdlle. Clarisse Bonval, one of the pensionnaires of the Comédie Française, died in September. Born in 1824, she was educated for the stage at the Conservatoire, and became a *sociétaire* at the Maison de Molière in 1843. Her *emploi* was that of soubrettes.

Mr. Frederick T. Brewster, dramatic critic of the *Alta California*, met last month with what proved a fatal accident. He was a son of ex-Attorney-General Benjamin Brewster, of Pennsylvania, and left that city in 1866 to come to the Pacific coast with a surveying party. He went to Arizona, and on his return to San Francisco became an *employé* of the Internal Revenue Department, which position he held at the time of his death. Recently he accepted the position of critic on the *Alta*, and in the two capacities made a wide circle of friends.

Mr. Paul Herring, the Drury-lane pantomimist, died on the 19th inst., aged 78. He was the first clown in Richardson's Show, but is now chiefly remembered as a pantaloon. During the last year or two he was

the old lady in the harlequinade, and it is stated that Mr. Chatterton decreed that the supernumerary who chanced to hurt the aged pantomimist should be fined.

Dimitri will be played at Covent Garden Theatre next season, Madame Patti and Signor Nicolini sustaining the principal characters.

Mr. Toole, we are informed, intends to assume at no distant period the responsibilities of theatrical management in London.

A Scrap of Paper will shortly be revived at the Court Theatre.

Mr. Henry Neville has signed an engagement for two years with the Adelphi management.

Mr. Sydney Grundy has written a new farcical comedy for Mr. Toole.

Mr. Albery's adaptation of *Les Fourchambault*, prepared for the Haymarket Theatre, is finished.

Uncle Tom's Cabin will be followed at the Princess's Theatre by Messrs. Hatton & Albery's drama.

Mr. Howard Kyrle, who is a son of the late Rev. J. M. Bellew, has been engaged to play jeune premier parts at the Lyceum.

Mrs. Bateman had intended to open Sadler's Wells at Christmas with a pantomime, but it has been found that the requisite transformation of the house cannot be effected by that date.

Mr. Leonard Boyne is going to the Court Theatre.

Mr. George Conquest, in consequence of continued ill health, has disposed of the lease of the Grecian Theatre, with which he has so long been associated, to Mr. T. G. Clark.

A new amateur dramatic club, the Roscius, has just been formed, under the presidency of Lord William Pitt Lennox.

Mr. Ernest Cuthbert has resigned the honorary secretaryship of the Green-Room Club, and has been succeeded by the Hon. L. Wingfield.

Mr. Charles Kelleker, the original usher in *Trial by Jury*, died on the 2nd October, in the twenty-fifth year of his age. He leaves a wife and two children.

Mr. Craven Robertson will shortly retire from the management of the *Caste* company in favour of Mr. Tom Robertson, son of the dramatist. *Birth* and *Home* are to be revived by the new manager.

The Shakspere Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon will be opened on the 23rd April next. Mr. Chatterton will have the direction of the entertainments to be given on the occasion.

It is almost decided that Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'amuse* will be given at the Comedie-Française this winter, probably with the following cast:—Triboulet, M. Coquelin; Le Roi, M. Worms; Saint Vallier, M. Maubant; Saltabadil, M. Mounet Sully; Blanche, Mme. Sarah Bernhardt.

It is expected that *Françoise de Rimini* will be produced by M. Capoul during the winter.

M. Gounod is not resting upon his oars. He has undertaken to compose the music for an opera called *La Tribut de Lamana*. The libretto is by M. d' Ennery and M. Brésil.

M. Vizentini, of the Théâtre Lyrique, has passed through his bankruptcy and obtained his discharge.

The rehearsals of M. Alexandre Duma's *Fils Naturel* have begun at the Français.

The new comedy at the Vaudeville this winter will be one by M. Gondinet, in three acts. The title is *Des Tapageurs*.

M. Alphonse Karr is in Paris. He brings with him a new piece, taken from his novel "Sous les Tilleuls."

A drama by M. Poupart-Davyl, *Les Derniers Gentilshommes*, is to be played at the Gaieté after *Orphée aux Enfers*. M. Lafontaine and Mme. Fargueil will create the principal rôles.

M. Victorien Sardou's *Jour de Noce* is now being put on the stage at the Opera Comique. It will be remembered that this piece was ready when the *Petit Duc* was brought out, but certain similarities of plot and situation caused the representation to be adjourned. The authors have now made important alterations. Mme. Galli-Marie will create the principal rôle.

The next piece at the Théâtre du Vaudeville will be *Le Mari de Madame Colas*, by M. Delacour and M. Mancel.

Abert's *Ekkehard* and Hoffman's *Arnim* are in rehearsal at the Berlin Opera House.

Konig Jerome, a comic opera, by Herr Ziehrer, is in rehearsal at the Ringtheater, Vienna.

At the Mannheim Court Theatre a trilogy representating the whole legend of Iphigenia was given with great success on the 8th, 9th, and 10th October, the three plays selected being Schiller's version of the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides, Herr Adolf Wilbrandt's version of the *Electra* of Sophocles, and Goethe's *Iphigenia auf Tauris*.

The Italian opera season at St. Petersburg has commenced.

The *Musical World* states that the Teatro della Pergola, Florence, will not be opened this year.

Herr Wagner's *Tannhäuser* will be brought out at Trieste on the 10th November.

For the first time these nine years, there will be an Italian opera company this winter at Athens.

The Teatro Sannazaro, Naples, has been purchased by the Duke di Marigliano for only 138,605 francs.

Mr. Mapleson's company arrived at New York on the 3rd October.

Mr. Jefferson lately visited the Big Trees and the Yosemite Valley. "I wish I could describe them to you," he writes; "but mortal man can neither paint nor tell of them."

Books.

A SCOTCH PLAY-HOUSE.*

FROM a very early period of its history in modern Europe the drama found a home in Aberdeen. Miracle plays were performed in the church or in booths adjacent thereto, the expenses being defrayed by the authorities. In 1562, when Mary Queen of Scots went to Aberdeen, plays and interludes were given in her honour, and at the end of the century a theatre which had been erected in Marischal-street was occupied for a time by some English players. The strangers appear to have produced a favourable impression, for in 1601 we find King James asking Elizabeth to send her company of comedians to Scotland. The request was readily complied with, and the players, who were commanded by Lawrence Fletcher, performed before the king and in several places in Scotland with complete success. At Aberdeen they were liberally paid by the magistrates, entertained at supper, and made free of the town. There can be little doubt but that Shakspere was one of the company, and that during the tour he acquired the topographical knowledge of Forres, Inverness, and Glamis which the author of *Macbeth* must have had. Nearly a century and a half seems to have elapsed before plays properly so-called were again performed in Aberdeen; the clergy, jealous of the influence exercised by the drama, induced the magistrates to withhold their sanction from anything in the shape of a theatrical performance. In 1745 and 1751 the Edinburgh company visited the town, but were not permitted to appear. Seventeen years afterwards a company to which "Memory" Woodfall belonged fitted up a theatre in the New Inn, and were out of pocket by the transaction. Between this and 1780, two or three theatres were erected, one in Shoe-lane and another in Queen-street. The latter, where an eccentric schoolmaster known as "Mad Sinclair," seated in the second row of the gallery, used to decide the fate of plays or particular specimens of the art of acting, was soon converted into a chapel. In 1795 another theatre was built in Marischal-street, its first manager being Stephen Kemble. Though for some years it barely paid its expenses, and though it was hotly denounced from the pulpit as a devil's chapel, it did not disappear from the list of places of amusement. In course of time it fell into the hands of Mr.

* *A Scotch Play-house, being the historical records of the old Theatre Royal, Marischal-street, Aberdeen.* By J. Keith Angus, Author of *So sinks the Day Star.* London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.

Corbet Ryder, the traditional Rob Roy of the Scottish stage, and at a later period into those of Mrs. Pollock. It became rich in theatrical associations: here some of the last rays of the genius of Edmund Kean were basked in; here it was that Macready fell in love with the graceful girl-actress who was destined to become his wife; here, too, Charles Young, Madame Catalani, Miss Helen Faucit, and Miss Braddon played to appreciative audiences. The old theatre has now become a church, but Aberdeen playgoers find compensation for their loss in the possession of the present handsome Opera House. Those who wish to have more than an outline of the history of the old theatre in Marischal-street will do well to consult Mr. Angus's little book, in which some interesting anecdotes are preserved.

TALES FROM THE OLD DRAMATISTS.*

IN this neat little volume, which is dedicated to Mr. Irving, the plots of eight old plays—*Venice Preserved*, *Don Sebastian*, the *Mourning Bride*, *Jane Shore*, *Cato*, the *Gamester*, *Douglas*, and *The Revenge*—are lucidly set forth. The work appears to us to be based on a misapprehension. The author assumes that the plays mentioned are so little known that it is necessary to state what they are about, and to convey some notion of the dramatists' language. Now, as a matter of fact, the plays are as well-known as their merits would lead us to hope, and Mr. Browne has undertaken quite a superfluous task. Charles Lamb, it is true, made a collection of "Tales" from even Shakspere's plays, but it should not be forgotten that his grace of fancy and expression lent a peculiar charm to his treatment of such a subject, and Mr. Browne does not enter upon his task with similar advantages. However, let us assume for the sake of argument that Mr. Browne is right, that the plays are really not better known than he makes out. Even in that case his volume has but little to recommend it. His accounts of the plots occupy scarcely less space than would the plays themselves, and such *raison d'être* as the book has accordingly disappears. But Mr. Browne is not content with merely giving the plots of the plays. He chivalrously undertakes to prove that these old dramatists were not so heavy and so ponderous as it is the fashion to allege. The enterprise is somewhat unnecessary, for no one who is capable of forming an opinion on the subject is likely to endorse the charge, and if a book is to be written to denounce every parrot-cry the reviewer's life will soon become a burden to him.

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* *Tales from the Old Dramatists.* By Marmaduke Browne, M.A. Remington & Co.

The Theatre.

DECEMBER 1, 1878.

The Watch-Tower.

MR. PHELPS.

HE death of Mr. Phelps, which occurred at Anson's Farm, near Coppersall, in Essex, on the 6th of November, was not altogether unexpected. His performances at the Gaiety matinées in 1876, it is true, displayed much of his former vigour, and until a comparatively recent period he might have been seen taking drives with his daughter or wielding the rod on the banks of a trout-stream for hours together. Early in the present year, however, it became painfully apparent that his strength and memory were leaving him, and towards the end of February he found himself unable to complete an engagement into which he had entered with the manager of the Aquarium Theatre. Though reluctant to leave the stage, he had too keen a sense of self-respect to remain upon it after his power to please had perceptibly diminished; and as the summer went on he laid aside a play which had been written for him at his own request by Mr. Richard Lee, declined the offer of an engagement to represent Leontes in the revival of *A Winter's Tale*, and finally abandoned the idea of ever appearing before the public again. In the autumn he rallied—rallied so much, indeed, as to listen to a proposal that he should take part in a series of Shaksperean performances at Drury Lane. Had the improvement in his health continued, we are informed, he would have been asked to strengthen the cast of the approaching revival at the Lyceum of *Hamlet* by

impersonating Polonius, and the interest which he took in the success of that theatre under its present management leads us to suppose that he would not have refused the invitation. The immediate cause of his death was congestion of the brain.

The son of a prosperous wine-merchant, of Scottish extraction, Mr. Phelps was born at Plymouth Dock, as Devonport was formerly called, on the 13th February, 1804. Having received a respectable education at Sabbath School, he was apprenticed to a printer, and on finding himself at liberty became an actor by profession. This was in 1828, and after a brief probation he played the whole of the "second business" on the York circuit for two years. "Who is the young man who played Tubal to-night?" inquired Edmund Kean, after playing Shylock at a theatre in the north at this time. "Samuel Phelps, sir." "Please send him to me." The young actor, fearing that he had made some terrible blunders, proceeded to the tragedian's dressing-room. "Mr. Phelps," said the great tragedian, clapping him on the shoulder, "you have played Tubal very, *very* well; persevere, and you'll make a name."* Many young actors of our own day would object to be "patronized" in such a manner; Mr. Phelps, fortunately for himself, was of another order. He took Kean's advice, and on the 28th of August, 1837, having acquired a high reputation in Scotland and Exeter, was brought forward at the Haymarket Theatre as Shylock. The next day Macready wrote in his diary:—"Sent for the *Morning Herald*, and read the account of Mr. Phelps's appearance, which seems to me a decided success. It depressed my spirits, though, perhaps, it should not do so. But an actor's fame and his dependent income are so precarious that we start at every shadow of an actor. It is an unhappy life!"

In the same year, in fulfilment of an engagement into which he had entered prior to his appearance at the Haymarket, Mr. Phelps went to Covent Garden Theatre, where he played Iago, Jaffier, and other parts of equal importance under the leadership of Macready. Prone as the older actor was to start at every shadow of a possible rival, he gave his colleague fair opportunities of distinguishing himself, and in the result a lasting friendship sprang up between them. Having played at the Lyceum Theatre during what was called the "synchretic season," Mr. Phelps accompanied Macready to Drury-lane, but did not remain there after the termination of his friend's lesseeship. In 1844, profiting by the abolition of the

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* Mr. Chatterton, in a letter to *The Times*, denies the authenticity of this anecdote, but as it was more than once related by Mr. Phelps himself we think ourselves justified in treating it as genuine.

monopoly which the patent theatres had so long enjoyed, Mr. Phelps, in conjunction with Mr. Greenwood, took Sadler's Wells Theatre with the avowed determination to make it a home of the higher drama. The wiseacres of the theatrical world may well be excused for sadly shaking their heads when they heard the news. The house, in addition to being dirty and dilapidated, had long been associated with entertainments of the coarsest stamp. The audience, the "gods" especially, conceived that they had a perfect right to sing, yell, and whistle throughout the performances, and undoubtedly had the courage of their convictions; Myddelton's river, overhung with trees, flowed silently by as on the days of Hogarth; the theatre itself had become a veritable pandemonium. The idea of bringing out fine plays in such a place seemed as quixotic as could well be imagined. Nevertheless, Mr. Phelps, who would probably not have taken the theatre if another had been available, did not abandon his project. He cleansed and redecorated the building, collected an efficient company, and confidently entered upon his campaign. The gallery did not give up their time-honoured privileges without a struggle, and it is on record that on more than one occasion Mr. Phelps had to throw a cloak over his stage dress and go there to aid in quelling a disturbance. Before long he educated the audience to appreciate in some degree the best dramatic works, and Sadler's Wells came to be acknowledged as the chief home in London of the legitimate drama. "Mr. Phelps," said Mr. Irving, last March, in the course of his address at Birmingham in defence of the stage, "has much to be proud of in his splendid achievements as an actor, and scarcely less in the great historic encouragement which, by his faith and patience, has been secured to those who labour in the same cause." Some particulars of the enterprising actor's management may not be unacceptable. Except *Henry VI.*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Troilus and Cressida*, every play believed to have been written by Shakspere was produced. Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, Otway, and other old dramatists obtained a hearing. Nor was the value of new plays overlooked; *John Savile, Feudal Times* and *James VI.* were first produced here. Every piece was effectively put upon the stage, and in the case of historical plays the greatest regard was shown for accuracy in the decorations and dresses. The acting was of a high order; Mr. Phelps himself took the lead, and Mrs. Warner, Mr. Marston, Miss Glyn, and Miss Atkinson were among the many noted players who took service under his banner. Though Mr. Phelps did not lose money by his undertaking, the encouragement given to him was not so great as might have been expected, and in 1862 he retired from the theatre. His subsequent

career — his appearances at Drury Lane, the Gaiety, and the Aquarium—is too well known to need more than a passing reference.

Mr. Phelps's management of Sadler's Wells forms an important chapter in theatrical history. He proved that the value of the stage as a means of education was much greater than had previously been supposed. Edmund Kean and Macready increased the effect of particular performances by devoting some attention to the archæological accuracy of the *mise-en-scène,* but it was not until Mr. Phelps went to Sadler's Wells that this accuracy was studied in the representation of every play which took us back to bygone times. Generally speaking, the architecture, the costumes, and the many accessories employed in the little theatre in such pieces were as correct as the antiquary could make them; and accordingly, the audience, in addition to seeing a fine play finely acted, received a lesson in history which could not but leave an enduring impression on their minds. In his famous revivals at the Princess's between 1851 and 1859, it may be said, Mr. Charles Kean simply carried out the policy of Mr. Phelps on a more elaborate scale than was possible at Sadler's Wells. The direction in which Mr. Phelps's histrionic powers lay could not be mistaken. In tragedy, it is certain, he never rose to greatness. *Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet,* and *Lear,* it has been truly said, were a little above his reach, even when his physical energies were at their best. Nature had denied him the warmth of imagination and deep sensibility without which no actor can meet the requirements of the characters we have named. But the audience always had a little compensation for their disappointment. In the parts for which he was least fitted he invariably displayed sound judgment, an acute perception of his author's meaning, and a rare mastery of the art of elocution. In comedy, thanks to a wonderful gift of dry humour, he appeared to considerable advantage. His Sir Pertinax Macsycophant could hardly have been surpassed by either Macklin or Cooke. His Bottom the Weaver was one of those performances which we may despair of ever seeing equalled or even approached. His Wolsey is enshrined in our memories by reason of its mixture of simple humour and dignified self-reliance. His name was also directly associated with many other parts, Dr. Cantwell, Sir Peter Teazle, Lord Ogleby, Job Thornberry, James I., and Justice Shallow. His Falstaff, though missing the unctuous joviality of the character, was extremely diverting, and as he buried his face in the tankard, Sir John seemed to sit *in propriâ personâ* before us. Like most distinguished actors, Mr. Phelps, it need hardly be said, had many

mannerisms; his delivery was unduly slow and emphatic, and his facial expression lacked variety. Mr. Phelps, it should be added, brought out an edition of Shakspere's plays in 1853, but the lion's share of the work was performed by Mr. E. L. Blanchard. In private life Mr. Phelps was much esteemed. "Forster called," Macready writes on Feb. 5, 1851, he then being lessee of Covent Garden. "He told me of the offer of Mr. Phelps, thinking my night was postponed for want of a company, to close his theatre and place his company at my disposal. It does him great honour." Many other such anecdotes might be related, but it may be enough to say that no one who had the privilege of his acquaintance failed to hold him in the highest regard.

FRENCH AUTHORS AND ENGLISH ADAPTERS.

APART from all collateral issues, irrespective of wrangles between dramatic agents and dramatic authors whose views of honour and literary morality are necessarily as wide asunder as the poles, it is quite clear that the indictment M. Victorien Sardou wishes to prefer against the Brothers Rowe is that they have altered *Dora*, and by their alterations have spoiled his play. M. Sardou, who is not superior to the foibles of human nature, and who, a martyr to constant pain, tortured by neuralgia, and overworked, may no doubt be excused some of his hyper-sensitiveness, does not acknowledge that which is patent to all unprejudiced minds, that the success of *Diplomacy* is an offence to the author of *Dora*. For *Diplomacy* is not *Dora*, and *Dora* is not *Diplomacy*. It may be well, therefore, now that the subject has arisen, to point out where the difference exists, and to try and ascertain how far the English adapters were justified in their own interests, for the sake of the management, and out of respect for the public, in altering the dramatic scheme which M. Sardou had deliberately propounded.

First of all the English adapters had to face the difficulty of a comedy in five acts; a difficulty which may appear trifling to M. Sardou, but one of the gravest importance to the comfort of audiences at the Prince of Wales's Theatre. Plays in five acts are assuredly not popular in London, least of all are they popular at Mrs. Bancroft's theatre, where three acts of Robertson have been accepted as correct in form. This question about the length of an entertainment seems trifling; in reality it is serious. In France no audience objects to being kept in the theatre until midnight

In England a play prolonged unduly after eleven is considered tedious. In France a dramatic author who writes a play occupying the whole of the evening takes the whole of the dramatic author's fees undivided; in England a dramatic author gets as many fees for a three-act as for a five-act play. In France M. Sardou delays his interest and dawdles over his first two acts in order to get every one into the theatre, when the excitement begins; in England the audience is settled by eight, and the sooner the interest begins after that the better. Presumably the Brothers Rowe knew all this: they were bound to know something about the audience and the theatre for which they were writing. At any rate they found *Dora* overburdened with five acts, and containing a "second act" so dull, so inconsequent, so purely conversational, and so presumably unnecessary, that by cutting it boldly out they shortened their play and cut off the one weak branch of *Dora*.

But let us see what *Dora* was like in acts 1 and 2. Act 1 of *Dora* begins very much as does *Diplomacy*, at Monte Carlo. We have the talkative mother, the story about the rifles, the picture of the two women hanging on for bare existence at the hotel; but we have also the scene at the ball-room, where Stramir, an adventurer, makes an improper proposal to Dora, and she responds by throwing her bouquet in his face, and by fainting in her mother's arms as she says "Sortez Monsieur." The retention of this scene would have necessitated the retention of act 2, a dull, episodical mass of political conversation in a fashionable *salon* at Versailles, dealing with "right and left" gossip of the Assembly, and matters altogether foreign to the idea of *Diplomacy*, which was to supply the Eastern Question for French home politics. It may be that the Brothers Rowe saw also a difficulty in dealing with this scene with Stramir as acted and not related. It is a risky scene at the best, and the situation of a young lady throwing her bouquet in a man's face at a ball is after all commonplace and melo-dramatic. It may pain M. Sardou to see his "situation" omitted and to hear that Dora describes the scene, and does not act it; but, on the other hand, if the first act of the original had been preserved with its original termination, there must have been five acts in *Diplomacy* instead of four, there must have been no Eastern Question at all; the second act of political conversation must have been retained, and in all probability the great gain in *Diplomacy* of making Julian and Henry Beauclerc *brothers* instead of casual friends, one a diplomatist and one *a sailor*, would have been jeopardized, if not rendered impossible. The second and third acts of *Diplomacy* follow pretty closely the third and fourth acts of *Dora*; but the fourth act of *Diplomacy* differs from the fifth act of *Dora* in consequence of the diplomatic change,

and owing to the omission of several of the coarse speeches of the Marquise, which would not have been tolerated by an English audience.

The essential differences between *Diplomacy* and *Dora* are these: The former is a shorter play, and so better adapted for the Prince of Wales's Theatre. The Eastern complication has been substituted for Versailles politics. The principal characters are Englishmen instead of Frenchmen. The two leading male characters are *brothers* instead of friends, thus giving a vigour and intensity to the great scenes of the play in which they are engaged.

The old-fashioned reply about the proof of the pudding being in the eating ought to be the best answer to M. Sardou on the part of the adapters of *Dora*. They had not to write for the Vaudeville Theatre, Paris, but for the Prince of Wales Theatre, London; they had not to study a French but an English audience. For Parisian politics no one here cared one straw, for the Eastern Question everyone last January cared a very great deal. The English audience did not particularly care to study M. Sardou's artistic method, but to see a good play; and the verdict of Tottenham Court Road has been echoed by crowded houses in every provincial town in England, and in all the chief cities of America. There are many amongst us who believe, and conscientiously believe, that French plays are as a rule spoiled in manipulation. They would be far worse than they are if left alone, disfigured by lengthy acts, tedious dialogue, sesquipedalian sentences, and the kind of stuff which is *caviare* to the general multitude. There are French plays, no doubt, dealing with those currents of human nature which are common to the civilized world, but these are few and far between. But plays of "society" must be altered and edited, or they will most certainly bear on their face curious solecisms; for, unless we are strangely mistaken, French society and English society, though only separated by the Channel, are as wide apart as if the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean flowed between. In France a girl begins her life when she is married; in England she ends it. This is the vital difference. The dramas of adultery so popular in France and so detested in England may be traced to this absorbing fact. M. Sardou probably thinks that society and human nature are pretty much alike in Paris and in London; and, without studying our stage and our society, he resents any interference with his work, which he, as an artist, considers perfect. We have no dramatist who in ingenuity, force, subtlety, and humour, can at all compare with M. Sardou; but, in spite of this admission, it is possible to see that *Dora*, which succeeded in Paris, might have failed in London. Of this truth an author so warmly

appreciated and so venerated as is M. Sardou will never be persuaded. He will go on thinking that the English are too piggish to understand art; that their adapters are as near idiots as they can be; that some meddlesome young men spoiled *Dora* in making it *Diplomacy;* that *La Haine,* which failed in Paris, ought to have been a success in England, for which country it was written, and rejected by the same critic who refused *La Poudre d'Or* the other day; that *Patrie* ought to have been a triumph instead of a failure; and that Sardou ought to be taken in nips, hot and strong, without any dilution of water. But then M. Sardou has got to prove that he has studied the English stage, and the idiosyncracies of the English nature. It is a difficult question; but some day M. Sardou will be persuaded that the "Brothers Rowe" are not the most eccentric people in our stage-land. If he really interested himself in English dramatic art, he, in his honest indignation, would have to show the door to more people than the authors of *Diplomacy.*

THE CENSORSHIP ON ITS TRIAL.

THE permanent official who presides over the Government department charged with the licensing of stage plays would just now be in something very like hot water if he were injudicious enough to attempt a reply to the accusations that are showered upon his devoted head. The habit of protesting against the decisions of functionaries from whom there is no appeal is very contagious, and it is perhaps only natural that a Mr. Sydney Grundy should arise to follow the example of a Mr. Arthur Matthison. Independently, moreover, of passing incentives such as that supplied by the tendency towards imitation, there is much to induce a disappointed author to protest against the arbitrary cause of his disappointment. It is, as we know from the wails of the unacted, hard enough to find any possible opening for the production of a new play, even though it be from the pen of one who, like Mr. Matthison, has a "growing dramatic reputation"; and when the young dramatist has discovered, or has made for himself, his chance, it must, to say the least of it, be aggravating to be prevented from making any use whatever of the good fortune waited for so long and so impatiently. That the prohibition by the Examiner of Plays involves a species of moral censure need not, perhaps, be considered, for our playwrights are too robust to care greatly for any condemnation of their work which does not refer to its art. But, leaving altogether out of the question the reason which brings about the

Lord Chamberlain's refusal of his sanction, the fact remains, that no man, even if he were far more philosophical than the average dramatic author, could possibly view with equanimity the practical destruction of the literary offspring which, with natural perversity, he is sure to consider his most promising production. The wonder seems to us to be not that Messrs. Matthison and Grundy have made their protest either plaintive or indignant, but that their duet has not been followed by a chorus of the similarly afflicted.

It is very certain, however, that the Examiner is in no way bound to attempt the vindication either of himself or of his office, because his decisions do not give universal satisfaction. It would indeed be difficult to imagine the administration of any such functions as his without the creation of grievances for all whose works justify the existence of the censorship as an institution. When, therefore, we find Mr. Grundy writing an intemperate and hysterical letter to a contemporary because a comedy by him and Mr. Mackay, called *A Novel Reader,* has been refused a license, we have to consider upon the strength of this attack, not whether the whole system of dramatic censorship is at fault, but whether, in this particular instance, the Examiner of Plays has been unwise or unjust. It is probable that in the first flush of disappointment plenty of other prohibited dramatists have felt much as Mr. Grundy seems to have felt, though they have not burst into diatribes against the "Goth and Vandal" official, and have penned no such high-falutin protest as that which concludes Mr. Grundy's letter in the following paragraph, which really deserves quotation :—"There are about the stage's door a number of young men, whose hearts are stouter than their predecessors', and whose hands are stronger. We are very obscure now, but our time will come. You, who endure this tyranny, your sands are nearly run. You are this generation; we are the next. We shall be living powers when you are dead and gone. You are a back wave in the tide of progress; we are the next wave onward. And if you question our ability, our answer is that through our veins there courses English blood; and we have read our English history. The fight for freedom glows on every page; and never yet has freedom not prevailed. Our minds are made up, and the thing is done. The liberty for which our fathers fought, and won with their life's blood, in English politics; the liberty for which our Brights and Cobdens strove and gained, for English food; the liberty which makes the English Press a power, we will accomplish for the English stage." Let us hasten to do Mr. Grundy the justice to say that the wild epistle from which we select this, the least effusive passage, is not in his best nor in his normal style. He seems to be uttering a shriek because he thinks

it more likely to attract attention than a soberly-spoken remonstrance would be; he is standing on his head in order to get a crowd round him, and when this object is accomplished he may be trusted to resume a more natural position. He probably means his threat of the number of stouthearted young men about the stage-door—the Matthisons, and Grundys, and Mackays, with their MSS. in their pockets—to be grotesque, and it is no more intended to be taken seriously than is the attack upon the existence of a censorship of the stage. Grant for a moment that Mr. Pigott and his predecessor, Mr. Bodham Donne, have, like other Government clerks, made their mistakes, and that Lord Hertford's is not the best intellect that could be chosen for the determination of questions of taste and morality; grant in addition to this, that whilst *Pink Dominos*, and *La Marjolaine*, and *Madame attend Monsieur*, should never have been licensed, there ought to have been no opposition to Mr. Matthison's version of *Les Lionnes Pauvres*, or to Messrs. Grundy and Mackay's *A Novel Reader*; grant all this, and even then it may still be that the censorship does more good than harm, and that this particular censor is upon the whole more often right than wrong in his conscientious decisions.

But so far as the evidence before us goes it cannot be maintained that we have any satisfactory proof that the Examiner of Plays was wrong in refusing his sanction to Mr. Grundy's drama. It has been stated in print that *A Novel Reader* is founded upon a comedy by Meilhac and Halévy called *La Petite Marquise;* and the statement has not been contradicted. Now this Variétés piece, in which Madame Chaumont created the chief character a few years ago, is a distinctly dirty play, impure in its meaning, indecent in its expression, and dependent for its interest upon its obscenity. Messrs. Grundy and Mackay may have succeeded in purifying the material out of which the Marquise de Kerzagon and her selfish lover make such entertaining capital; and if they have done so their deodorizing process must be highly ingenious and singularly efficacious. They must have been clever indeed if they have been able to strain all the filth out of *La Petite Marquise* without losing all that is, from a dramatic point of view, worth anything in the French original. We find it indeed impossible to regret any specific act of interference on the part of legally appointed authorities which have deprived London playgoers of the chance of seeing a version of MM. Meilhac and Halévy's unpleasant play. It may be that we are wronging *A Novel Reader* in our estimate of its probable character; but if its origin be what we suspect, this fact, added to the censor's view of it, lends strong confirmation to the belief that the play has features such as may

fairly be held objectionable. At any rate the adverse opinion of the Examiner of Plays cannot well be matter for surprise, except on the assumption that this functionary is desirous to repeat the most egregious blunders of his past rule. All these and kindred questions we can answer only when Mr. Grundy gives his promised representation of *A Novel Reader* at some place where no entrance-fee is charged, and where no excisable liquors are sold. With regard to this performance the authors may, it seems, legally snap their fingers at the Lord Chamberlain—a strange satire upon the office of Examiner of Plays, unless, indeed, the representation take the form of purely private theatricals. After this we can definitely decide whether Mr. Grundy has been unjustly or inconsistently treated, and whether the public has really lost or gained by the action of the paid officials who will not let *A Novel Reader* be played where seats are paid for and refreshments are sold.

In the meanwhile, and be the issue what it may, we may certainly congratulate ourselves upon any condition of dramatic affairs which will cause clever young playwrights like Mr. Grundy to turn their attention from nasty or risky French originals and to rely for their stage work upon their own powers of invention. If by any action of the Examiner of Plays they could be induced to do this, it is very certain that the national drama would gain, as it never could from the adaptation, however well performed, of such foreign plays as *Les Lionnes Pauvres* and *La Petite Marquise*. Though we may not believe in the deliberate protection of art any more than in that of commerce, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that if our dramatic authors imported less from abroad, our native production of stage work would greatly benefit.

Portraits.

IX.—MISS ROSELLE.

IT is not the least cogent of the arguments against the employment of children on the stage that the promise held forth by their performances is but seldom realized. The juvenile "wonder" has not inaptly been compared to a tree in a forcing-house; the blossom or fruit is prized because it comes before its time, but the principle of fructification is soon destroyed. Fed by thoughtless applause, the vanity of the child-players, unless kept within bounds by judicious counsel or inborn common sense, leads them to think more of what they have already accomplished than of what has to be done to secure a lasting reputation, and the training they are necessarily subjected to in a theatre imparts to their style a staginess which they afterwards find it impossible or at least very difficult to throw off. Nor should it be forgotton that their opportunities of observing human nature in its multifarious aspects are deplorably few. Indeed, it may be doubted whether anybody should be allowed to appear on the boards of a theatre until body and mind have arrived at something like maturity. That many actors and actresses have risen superior to the ill effects of this strained precocity is beyond dispute, and among the number, we think, must be classed the lady whose portrait is now before our readers. Born as recently as 1854, Miss Amy Roselle, as many playgoers will remember, acted in childhood with her brother, Master Percy Roselle. Her success was so great that at the age of fifteen she was intrusted with leading characters at the Cardiff, Swansea, and Plymouth theatres in succession—certainly a significant circumstance. In the last-mentioned town her abilities attracted the attention of Mr. Sothern, who at once gave her a place in the company then travelling with him about the provinces, and before long procured for her an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre. Barely seventeen years of age, Miss Roselle, in all the trepidation which débutantes ordinarily experience on such occasions, appeared there as Lady Teazle. Those who had witnessed her juvenile efforts soon perceived that she was not to share the usual fate of child wonders. Her self-possession having been restored by a cordial reception, she displayed freshness and vivacity of style, a quick perception of the humorous, and a conscientious regard for the requirements of the character she was impersonating. At the end of the second scene she was called before the

THE THEATRE No5 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Yours very truly
Amy Gillette.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

curtain with an energy which left no doubt as to the sincerity of the compliment; and Mr. Buckstone, meeting her at the wings as she went off, expressed himself "most delighted" with her,—a speech which, for one so chary of praise as the veteran actor and manager, may not incorrectly be described as a burst of enthusiasm. The critics—the terrible critics—were of one accord in welcoming the young actress to London. That the acute representative of *The Times* was on her side need hardly be said; the *Daily Telegraph* declared that her career would be watched with deep interest. The verdict of the press seems to be summed up in one sentence of the *Observer* critique: "Miss Roselle," said the writer, "comes to London just at the right time, as we are sadly in need of a good *ingénue*." In the *English Gentleman; or, the Squire's Last Shilling*, a comedy by Mr. Byron, the new-comer perceptibly confirmed the advantage she had gained. "Young, pretty, clever, utterly devoid of staginess and affectation, always fresh and pleasant, Miss Roselle," said the critic we have already quoted, "played a small character so well as to win over her audience at once." Having played at the Haymarket until the end of the season, Miss Roselle accepted an engagement to accompany Mr. Sothern to the United States, where her success was also conspicuous. In the spring of the following year, 1872, she returned to London; and in the following September was engaged by Mr. Chatterton to support Mr. Phelps and Mr. Creswick in Shaksperean plays at the Princess's Theatre. Among the characters she undertook here were Portia, Ophelia, Desdemona, and Julie de Mortemar. Up to this time, as far as London was concerned, her name had been exclusively associated with light comedy parts, and her performances at the Princess's afforded welcome evidence that she could take much higher ground to the advantage of both the play-going community and herself. Christmas arriving, Miss Roselle returned to the Haymarket. Since that time she has enjoyed an ever-increasing reputation. It is worthy of note that she was the first representative of the lively Mary Melrose in *Our Boys*, and the creator of the principal character will doubtless pardon us if we say that her love scene with Talbot Champneys contributed in a marked degree to the success which the piece achieved from the time of its production. Last summer, when Mr. and Mrs. Kendal left the Prince of Wales's Theatre to make their provincial tour, Miss Roselle was engaged to play Dora in *Diplomacy*. In replacing so gifted an actress as Mrs. Kendal she undoubtedly risked much, and it is only due to her to state that she has fairly overcome the disadvantage. Her acting in the trying scene of the third act is womanly, dignified, and pathetic in a very high degree.

The Round Table.

MR. PHELPS AND *THE FOOL'S REVENGE.*

By Tom Taylor.

SOMEWHERE between 1856 and 1859 Robson came to me with a request that I would transform *Rigoletto* from an opera to a play, as he thought he "saw himself" in the part of the jester. I asked him why he should think of Verdi's *Rigoletto* when he had Victor Hugo's Triboulet within reach. I found, as might have been expected, that the popular actor knew nothing of *Le Roi s'amuse*. His desire to play Rigoletto had been fired either by seeing Ronconi in the part, or by description of the effect he produced in it. I told him at once to dismiss from his mind the idea of a conversion of the opera into a play. Horrors which were tolerable in a musical dress would be intolerable treated in a more naked stage form. Even Victor Hugo's drama, I added, as far as I remembered it, contained much that would in all probability be fatal to its acceptance by a British public, unexcited by the battle of Classicists and Romanticists, and only tolerant of horrors in its own measure and on its own conditions. But I would re-read Victor Hugo's play, I told him, and let him know the result.

On reading *Le Roi s'amuse* with this object (as I have already stated in effect in the preface to the printed play of *The Fool's Revenge*), I found so much in it that seemed to me, if not absolutely inadmissible at least likely to be unacceptable on our stage; so much besides that was wanting in dramatic motive and cohesion, and—I say it in all humility—so much that was defective in that main-spring of stage-effect—climax, that I determined to take the situation of the Jester and his daughter, and to re-cast in my own way the incidents in which their story had been invested by the French dramatist. I shall, no doubt, be told again, as I have often been told already, that "this was very presumptuous in me, even if quite honest"; "that a dramatic author has no business to borrow from the ideas of others; that the 'adapter' is an objectionable person altogether, who cannot in fairness claim any higher function than that of translator; that Victor Hugo is a great classic, whose work should be sacred; that though Molière might say '*Je prends mon bien où je le trouve*,' the saying has been perverted by those who construe it into a warrant for taking effective dramatic *matériel*

wherever they find it, the phrase having really been used by the great French comic poet to justify the resumption of a scene of his own which had been appropriated without acknowledgment by a would-be rival; that it is in fact an assertion of the right to reclaim stolen goods, not a claim of special right on the dramatist's part to steal them. This I believe, in fact, to be a strictly correct interpretation of Molière's first use of the maxim which has so often been quoted in justification of dramatic larceny.

Leaving all this, however, on one side for the present, and omitting any attempt to maintain the justice of my criticism of *Le Roi s'amuse* as a stage-play, I have only to say that at that time I went with an untroubled conscience about my work of refitting Triboulet and Blanche into a new story with new surroundings. I had just been reading the *History of the Italian Republics,* and the story of the poisoning of Galeotto Manfredi, lord of Faenza, by his jealous wife, Francesca Bentivoglio, had struck me as highly suggestive of dramatic treatment. The jester and his daughter fitted readily into the framework of a brilliant but vicious Italian Court of the Renaissance, with its reckless lusts, its dark intrigues, its fierce jealousies, its subtle and sudden poisonings. Here seemed to be an excellent medium for setting forth both the jester's wrongs, his long-cherished purpose of revenge, and its final miscarriage, under the mysterious guidance of that Divinity—"That shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will." But the purpose of this paper is not to assert originality of motives or machinery for my play of *The Fool's Revenge,* though in fairness both to an illustrious French dramatist and myself it seemed not unfitting to say this much of the drama which first brought me into personal contact with Mr. Phelps, as manager of Sadler's Wells Theatre.

When the play was finished I read it to Robson. It had shaped itself into blank verse, as plays *do* shape themselves, as if by conditions of their own begetting. Now Robson had never played a blank verse part. His theatre, the Olympic, was not known in connection with blank verse plays. He liked the play and the part much, but whether it was a self-engendered fear of adventuring on a form of work new to him and unfamiliar to his theatre, or an alarm inspired in him by his partner, Mr. Emden, the result, after much discussion, was my promising to write him another part instead of Bertuccio, and after some little interval, my sending *The Fool's Revenge* to Phelps, who had already produced with success some of my dear old friend James White's historical plays.

Phelps read my plays with a promptness as gratifying as unusual. Except when managers are on the very horns of a

dilemma, I have usually found even the best of them slow to read plays, slower to make up their minds about them, and slower still to make their minds known to the authors. The loss of that old-fashioned functionary, the "reader" of a theatre, whose business it was to read all plays submitted to the management, and to pronounce judgment on them, is a very serious one for authors. Any risk of suffering by the reader's unfavourable verdict would, I should think, be more than compensated by the certainty of a reading within something like reasonable time, and a judgment of some kind—in all probability quite as trustworthy as the manager's—an actor, in nine cases out of ten, who, if the piece contain a part for him, is but too likely to judge it entirely with reference to the chance he sees, or thinks he sees, of making a hit in that part.

No doubt Phelps saw a good part for himself in Bertuccio. But, at least, he lost no time in satisfying himself, and me, that the piece would suit both him and his theatre, and that he would put it in rehearsal without delay. As far as he could see, he said there were no cuts or changes wanted. I may say, *en passant*, that this judgment was borne out by the event. *The Fool's Revenge* is the only one of all my plays put on the stage absolutely as it was sent into the theatre, without alteration of a scene, a speech, or even a line, as far as I remember, at rehearsal. I have no recollection of reading the play to the Sadler's Wells company. I rather think Phelps must have read it, but I may be mistaken; if he did read it, it is the only instance of managerial reading in my long experience of the theatre.

But if I have forgotten the reading, I well remember the rehearsals. In consultation with Mr. Phelps, the period of the costume and scenery was fixed at the time of Francis the First, though this was later than the date of the play. I suppose some scenery already in the theatre, and costumes already in the wardrobe were then made available. We were of one mind that, provided the scenery and costume were effective in themselves, and consistent essentially with each other, a few score years too soon or too late were perfectly immaterial. That was before the days of absolute realism and scrupulous archæology; but not in the most precise and martinettish West-end theatre of the time, could more pains have been taken to realize correctness in essentials, and, above all, consistency of dresses and scenery, architecture, properties, and appliances, than in Sadler's Wells. In this respect Phelps seemed to me to hit the true mean between too much and too little as regards show, cost, and keeping in stage externals. All was thought of and all was done that

could conduce to effect, nothing neglected that was needed to help the picture or impress the imagination. But there was no pedantry, no idle or ostentatious outlay, no insisting on archæological minutiæ for their own sake, none of the feeling which made Charles Kean, at the Princess's, call out to the actor who was rehearsing Edmund in *Lear*, when he gives Edgar his key, "Make more of the key, sir; Good God, you give it him as if it was a common room-door-key! Let the audience see it, sir; make 'em feel it, sir; impress upon 'em that it is a key of the period!"

The cast of *The Fool's Revenge* included, with Mr. Phelps as Bertuccio, Mr. H. Marston as Manfredi; Mr. F. Robinson as Serafino del' Aquila, the young poet; Mr. Belford as Torelli; Miss Atkinson as the jealous, revengeful Francesca; Miss Heath as the pure and innocent Fiordelisa, Bertuccio's daughter; and Mrs. H. Marston as her duenna. I never saw rehearsals more thorough, more careful, or more business-like. Phelps was as able as he was indefatigable in stage-management. He did the work of guidance and governance of his actors singly, and of the action as a whole, which now-a-days in nineteen cases out of twenty has to be done by the author, or, failing him, is not done at all. Stage-management, to one who remembers Macready at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, the Keans at the Princess's (where the wife wrought even more strenuously than the husband), and Phelps at Sadler's Wells, seems, with rare exceptions, a lost art. When one thinks how all-important for stage results good stage-management is, one may well stand aghast at most of what passes for it in these days. It would be well if both English managers and actors could be put through a course of rehearsals in a good French theatre, that they might see how our neighbours understand and practise this, as other parts of their theatrical business.

But I never saw French rehearsals more careful and thorough than those of my play at Sadler's Wells under Phelps. He had something of the irritability of Macready, and was not slow to give stupid, or, still more, careless people the rough side of his tongue; but his heart was so evidently in his work, he was so thoroughly master of the business he was directing, he so evidently thought of and for all, never sacrificing other scenes to his own, or other actors to himself, that his little ruggednesses and fiercenesses never rankled, and were rarely resented even at the moment. Then his example of strenuous diligence operated on all about him, and made them attentive and strenuous too in their several degrees, so that no time was lost; and, though the rehearsals were so strict and elaborate they took up no more time than more slipshod ones would have done. In short, rehearsal, as I saw it in the case of my own play

at Sadler's Wells, was what rehearsal should be, continuous, well-considered, patient, shaping of the play for public performance, in which not merely the groupings and movements of the personages were attended to, but the delivery of every speech watched, nay, the emphasis and pronunciation of every word noted. There were many Italian names to be delivered, which Phelps was most careful to have rightly pronounced, not let slide in the happy-go-lucky fashion which is the rule, or rather no rule, of the average English theatre, where every actor seems left at liberty to put his own pronunciation on any word of a foreign language that comes in his part.

When the play was produced on the 18th of October, 1857, after three weeks of patient and laborious rehearsal, more than equivalent to twice as much time less well employed, the good result was apparent in a smooth, level, and satisfactory performance, with no stage hitch in scenery, speech, or movement, in which nothing had been left to chance, nothing sacrificed to carelessness. Phelps himself was admirable in the part of Bertuccio, which in the earlier scenes perfectly suited his sardonic and saturnine manner, while in the interview with his daughter it gave scope for that deep and yearning affection beneath the hardness and harshness which made the actor so great in parts like Old Dornton and Job Thornberry, to my mind beyond question his masterpieces; while in the third act it afforded an opportunity, of which Phelps availed himself with immense effect, of presenting the cross-currents of many moods and motives—exulting malignancy, snake-like insinuation, anticipated triumph, gratified revenge, passing through many phases of doubt and bewilderment, and culminating in the horrible conviction that Bertuccio has compassed his own child's abduction and dishonour—perhaps death. I have never seen acting more intense than in his desperate attempts to wear the jester's mask, in the hope that it may secure him access to the pavilion in which his daughter is shut up at the mercy of the ruthless Duke, and in danger besides of the poison of the jealous Duchess. If ever actor satisfied author, Phelps satisfied me in Bertuccio. I have always thought it his most powerful impersonation, though from the great strain it put upon him it soon became too much for his strength, and when I last saw him in the part I was sensible of a great falling off.

The play was successful, and had a considerable run,—such a run, indeed, as at Sadler's Wells, with its public in great measure local, and its habitual, almost nightly, frequenters, was considered quite out of the common. After a time it was played, as was usual, alternately with other pieces. *Twelfth Night* was one of

them. I remember an amusing incident to which the alternation of *The Fool's Revenge* with Shakspere's comedy gave occasion. The friend who told me the story was sitting near a respectable elderly man who had listened to *Twelfth Night* with great enjoyment of the rollicking humours of Sir Toby, the shallow conceit of Sir Andrew, and the grave self-satisfaction of Malvolio, and had shown such sense of the tender sweetness of Viola, the archness of Maria, and the love-longing of Olivia, as might be expected from any one of a Sadler's Wells audience in those days. But he was apparently one of those who knew no more of Shakspere than Phelps revealed to him, not one of the many more deeply initiated whom he had sent to the fountain-head of inspiration —Shakspere himself. Unluckily, he had unwittingly got hold of a bill of the day before, with the announcement of *The Fool's Revenge,* and thought all the time that he was assisting at my play. At last he turned to my friend. "Well, I must say it *is* a clever play— a'most as good as one of the real old 'uns; but I don't see why it's called by that name." My friend, not aware of his neighbour's mistake, and perhaps not exactly seeing himself how the comedy comes to be christened *Twelfth Night,* did not attempt to enlighten him. At last, in the scene where the Clown after getting Malvolio shut up as a lunatic interrogates him through the grating as Sir Topaz, the stranger turned round to my friend, chuckling with an air of immense relief: "Ah! he's down on him, aint he? I *see* now why they call it *The Fool's Revenge*"; and then my friend learnt for the first time that his neighbour had sat so far through *The Twelfth Night* in the quiet conviction that he was assisting at my drama.

When I look back on what I then saw of Phelps's management in action, the enormous labour of his rehearsals, the conscientious thoroughness of his acting, and his abandonment to the passion of his part, his devotion every day and all day long to the labours of his art and the cares of his theatre, I feel I can understand better than those who knew his work only in its finished results, as it came before the public eye, what an enormous amount of Phelps's best life must have been put into the eighteen years of his management of Sadler's Wells. Knowing how much of mental as well as bodily strain those eighteen years' work must have cost him, I feel how wretchedly inadequate must have been his reward, either in money made, reputation won, or credit and honour given, had it not been for the other and incalculably higher rewards derived from love of art, sense of duty fulfilled, and that consciousness of good work done which is all the sweeter the harder are the conditions of the doing. I have not time or space here to say what I should like to say of

the good work done by Phelps at Sadler's Wells. To my mind he stands out as one of the most potent and profitable among the unrecognised and unrewarded civilizers and educators of his time. He brought a noble and admirable form of the art which, above all art, combines all the elements that appeal to the popular imagination within reach of a local public, which had, before his time, seen that art only in its most debased and coarsest forms; to say nothing of that larger public which, during the eighteen years between 1844 and 1862, found in Sadler's Wells stronger and better served stage food for the eye and mind than they could find in any of the more aristocratic quarters of the town, or any of the more pretentious homes of the drama, during the same period.

When the educating and refining influences of the stage as the great fuser and applier of all the arts, for working on masses as well as on units of mind, come to be more adequately appreciated than they are, the work done by Phelps at Sadler's Wells in continuation of that initiated by Macready at Covent Garden and Drury Lane will have a chance of being fairly estimated.

THE GRAVE OF RICHARD III.

By Henry Irving.

ONE August morning in 1485, King Richard III., surrounded by all the pomp, pride, and circumstance of royalty and glorious war, left Leicester at the head of about twelve thousand men to give battle to Richmond. It is said that as he was crossing Bow Bridge his spur came in contact with one of the battlements, and that an old woman loudly predicted that before long his head would strike against the same stone. The battle of Bosworth was lost and won, and the body of the usurper, covered with wounds, and besmeared with dust and blood, was stripped, irreverently flung across the back of a horse, and, preceded by a pursuivant, "Blanc Sanglier," brought back to Leicester and exposed to view at one of the fortified gates of the town in order to prove that the last of the Plantagenets had really ceased to exist. The old woman's prophecy, we are told, was duly fulfilled; at Bow Bridge the horse carrying the body swerved, and the king's head was dashed against the battlement referred to. That a prediction bearing upon his fate should have been manufactured after the event must be taken as a matter of course; but let that pass. The body, having been exposed to every indignity short of destruction, was "begged" by the

monks of the Grey Friars, who gave it a decent interment in the Church of St. Mary. In 1538, as an indirect consequence of the suppression of the monasteries, the church was razed to the ground and the grave desecrated, and from that to the present it has not been known what became of the remains.

Local tradition, however, supplies an answer to the question here raised. Though Henry VII. had placed a monumental pillar over his predecessor's grave, the abhorrence in which Richard's memory was held by the nation had not sensibly diminished with lapse of time, and the publication of Sir Thomas More's famous book served in many quarters to add fuel to the flame. The Church of St. Mary having been destroyed, the populace of Leicester, actuated at once by their detestation of Richard's character and a belief that their conduct would win the approval of the powers that were, took the remains from the coffin, dragged them through the streets to the spot where the old woman uttered the prophecy, dashed them against the historic battlement, and finally cast them ignominiously into the Soar. A few spectators of the outrage, thinking that the body of a King of England ought to have been treated with at least a show of respect, hastily collected the bones and reinterred them in the burying-place of the Augustine Friars, on the west side of Bow Bridge, without a coffin.

There are many reasons for believing that this tradition is founded upon truth. Holinshed, who gives it as a fact, published his chronicles in 1577, only thirty-two years after the demolition of St. Mary's Church. Many eye-witnesses of the desecration of the grave must then have been alive, and might have supplied him with information on the subject. No trace of human remains could be discovered in the place of the first interment. No one knew where the bones lay—a fact which strengthens the supposition that they had been either carried away by the river or buried hastily and surreptitiously. Notwithstanding the beneficial laws he had introduced, Richard's name was execrated through the length and breadth of the country, and such a scene as that which is said to have occurred at Bow Bridge is well within the bounds of probability. Lastly, a stone coffin used as a horse-trough at the White Horse Inn for about two hundred years after the disappearance of the Church was said to be that in which the body had been placed in 1485, and local antiquaries regarded it as such. This coffin, by the way, was broken up at the end of the reign of George I., the pieces being used in the construction of some steps in the cellar of the inn by which it had so long stood.

Old Bow Bridge has long since disappeared, and has been replaced by a handsome iron structure. Hard by, on the wall of a

brick building, may be seen a slab with the following inscription :—

NEAR
THIS SPOT
LIE
THE REMAINS
OF
RICHARD III.,
THE LAST OF THE
PLANTAGENETS.
1485.

The arguments in favour of the old tradition are, in fact, sufficiently cogent.

Before laying down the pen I may be permitted to allude to another association of the town of Leicester with Richard III. The night before the battle of Bosworth the King slept at a hostelry loyally called the White Boar. Here he had the depressing dreams to which it is said that he alluded on the field, and which have been immortalized by Shakspere and Drayton. The battle over, it was deemed prudent to change the name of the inn, and soon afterwards the Boar became Blue instead of White. The King slept in a camp bedstead which he had brought with him from London, and which he left at Leicester. It is of oak, has panels of different coloured wood, bears traces of elaborate gilding, is ornamented with fleurs-de-lis (an emblem much affected by the House of Plantagenet), and may be doubled up in the form of a chest. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the then landlord of the inn, one Clarke, discovered in the bedstead a false bottom, together with a large sum of money. The result was that from a comparatively poor he became a prosperous man ; nay, actually attained to the dignity of Mayor. He died in 1605 without enlightening any of his townsmen as to the cause of his sudden prosperity ; his widow, however, imprudently revealed the secret, and the housemaid, aided by a lover, suffocated her mistress in order to obtain possession of the remainder of King Richard's treasure. The crime was brought home to both the principal and the accessory, and the former was burned to death and the other hanged. The bedstead has been preserved, but the old Boar Inn, which stood in Blue Boar Lane, was pulled down a little more than forty years ago.

THE NATIONAL THEATRE QUESTION.

By GEORGE GODWIN, F.R.S.*

ABOUT seven years ago, when presiding at a public meeting whereat the lamented Dr. Doran had delivered an eloquent

* In this article will be found the substance of a Paper which was read at the Social Science Congress in October.

address, "For and Against Shakespeare," I urged the want of a theatre not wholly controlled by the temporary predominant taste of the public, and commented on the unsatisfactory condition of things with regard to the education of actors. The establishment was called for of a theatre, subsidised by Government or by a public subscription, wherein plays of the highest character should be performed, and which should serve as a school for actors. These words evidently gave expression to the thoughts of many. Mr. J. R. Planché, Mr. Tom Taylor, Lord Dufferin, Mr. E. L. Blanchard, Mr. Arthur Sketchley, Mr. Joseph Knight, and others who had good right to speak, supported the proposition, which, however, came to nothing. Recently the subject has again been brought forward.

One of the most painful facts in connection with the stage is the predominance of what Mr. Boucicault has felicitously described as "commercial management." Any person, however incompetent to hold such a position, provided he has money of his own or of some one else's to risk in the speculation, may obtain the licence of the Lord Chamberlain to open and conduct a theatre, and consequently inflict upon the town any performance which is considered most likely to bring money, no matter how destitute of literary merit and how demoralising its tendency,—if it can only slip through the not too rigid scrutiny of the Examiner of Plays. Lamentable as this may be, there is a far greater evil of modern growth which has deteriorated and, at the same time, disgraced the stage of this country to a fearful extent. With what feelings are we to contemplate a theatre avowedly directed, or notoriously known to be influenced by, an illiterate and disreputable *favorita,* possessing, beyond the charms of her person (which it is her pleasure lavishly to display to an admiring public), not the least qualification for her profession. What a weapon is placed thereby in the hands of the enemies of the stage and the calumniators of actors and actresses! Such an exhibition would not be tolerated for a moment in any foreign theatre. Indifferent as the French *parterre* may be to the immorality of a *libretto,* complacently as it may contemplate the human (female) form divine, liberally developed by the fair performers in it, incapacity is an offence immediately visited with indignant sibilation.

It is nonsense to talk of the decline of the drama. It has not declined,—it has simply been thrust aside by stupidity and cupidity. The threadbare worn quotation,—

> "The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
> And those who live to please must please to live,"—

has been misinterpreted by theatrical showmen for their own pur-

poses, and is still made the excuse for every desecration of the stage by many who know or ought to know better. Who are the drama's patrons? That large portion of the pleasure-seeking public who will go anywhere to see anything? Or the fast young men of rank and fashion, and their empty-headed imitators in the middle classes, who vote everything dull that is not meretricious? Or the more fastidious of "the Upper Ten," whose refined tastes lead them to frequent those theatres only wherein modern comedies, original or translated, faithfully reflecting the manners of the present day, are irreproachably acted and put upon the stage? Did it never occur to a manager that besides the masses we have enumerated, and whose special predilections are abundantly provided for, there are thousands, to speak moderately, who never willingly enter the doors of a theatre, and would eagerly patronise one in which they could enjoy the rare delight of witnessing the masterpieces of our great English dramatists adequately interpreted? Can any instance be adduced of the revival of a great play, efficiently acted and artistically placed upon the stage, which has not been a financial success? Was *Hamlet* played at the Lyceum for two hundred successive nights to bare benches?

Injudicious selection, unintellectual stage direction, incompetent exponents, must in these critical days entail failure, and deservedly so. It is sufficient for our argument that as much loss, if not more, attends the failure of worthless modern productions, which have depended solely on spectacular effects for their attraction. The mission of the stage, we are told, is to "hold the mirror up to nature" as nature appears to us in the present day to

> "Shoot folly as it flies,
> And catch the manners *living as they rise.*"

I do not deny that for a moment, and rejoice in the success that has attended many pieces which have been written on this principle. But have they permanently enriched the English drama? How many standard plays have they added during the last fifty years to the grand catalogue of imperishable works bequeathed to us by the poets and wits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and which, despite of fashion, prejudice, ignorance, and other disadvantages, are, and will continue to be, the staple of our stage as long as there is a stage? Hitherto only five-act comedies have been spoken of. Let us turn to the lighter class in three acts, which had their rise at "the little theatre" in the Haymarket. To this class many pleasant contributions have been made by Mr. Planché, Mr. Byron, Mr. Albery, Mr. Tom Taylor, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Burnand, and notably by the late Mr. Robertson, whose charming sketches of modern society have made the

fortune of the well-managed little theatre wherein they were so perfectly mounted and so admirably acted. But how about the vitality of the works? How long will the best of them survive their lamented author? All the greatest comedies that were ever written, from Aristotle down to George Colman the younger, reflect the manners of the day and country in which they were composed, and are consequently invaluable for educational purposes; why, then, should not those of our present dramatists be destined to an equal celebrity and term of existence? The answer might not be considered complimentary, for it would suggest comparisons, and, to quote a still-existing comedy of some little reputation, "comparisons are odorous."

There is no desire to interfere with legitimate speculation, or to deprive any portion of the public of the entertainment most acceptable to them. My quarrel is with those who would prevent a large body of educated persons from enjoying an especial description of theatrical entertainment, which is undoubtedly of a higher order and requires artists of the greatest ability to interpret. We ask but for one theatre which, either by private subscription or Government subsidy, may be devoted to this object, and rendered independent of the caprices of fashion or the prevailing taste of the public. It must be a theatre in which the educated public can enjoy regularly, and not spasmodically, the best plays, acted with intelligence, and placed on the stage reverentially and artistically. "Look at the results of the system as it is," says the writer of an excellent article in the first number of the new series of *The Theatre*. "Does private enterprise find itself equal to the task of presenting the noblest English dramas by thoroughly adequate companies all the year round? The mere pecuniary difficulty in the way of securing such a company and such a *répertoire* as those of the Théâtre Français places the undertaking wholly beyond the reach of individual effort; nor, indeed, could it be overcome by any aid which was unable to compensate for comparative smallness of salary by offering *prestige*, permanent employment, leisure for study and pleasure, and the prospect of a pension in years to come."

My own conviction is strongly in favour of a State subvention,—a subsidised theatre where the glories of our past writers might be enjoyed and new poetical and thoughtful works fittingly brought forward. The chances for obtaining this have lately greatly increased, and opinions in its favour have been expressed in influential quarters. Mr. Gladstone, in the course of a letter to the editor of *The Theatre*, says, "I have already thought that there are strong arguments,—among them some which may be drawn from

the existence of institutions like the Royal Academy,—to show that the Drama requires, in order to its prosperity, some great centre of attraction and of elevation." To obtain this subsidised theatre, however, in England, may be a work of time, and would probably require, as a first step, a properly organised and regulated company; whereas it is most desirable that such a theatre as we are looking for should be established at once. The question then is, how can the experiment best be tried? I fall back on the plan which I have ventured before now to suggest for consideration,—that plan which gave us the Great Exhibition of 1851 and some of its successors,—a *list of guarantors;* a hundred persons, say, subscribing each a certain small sum for the first expenses, and giving their names for a larger sum in case of necessity; a small committee of the guarantors to supervise; and a proper and responsible manager. An existing theatre to be taken (pending the time when a model house should be provided), large pit, and moderate prices; no long runs; no short hirings of actors; a dramatic school attached; the advancement of the drama, and the healthful amusement and delight of the public to be considered the paramount object of the undertaking.

A few words now from others. Being able to quote the opinion of statesmen and dramatists, I thought it desirable to obtain also the opinion of some eminent actors. Mr. Irving writes to me —"The question of the establishment of a National Theatre is surrounded by so many difficulties, and has so many side issues, that the time at present at my disposal does not allow me to go properly into it. The two questions which must from the beginning be held in view are:—Is a National Theatre desirable? Is its establishment upon a permanent basis a possibility? With regard to its desirability I have little, if any, doubt. In this country artistic perfection or a high ideal is not always the road to worldly prosperity; and so long as open competition exists there will always be found persons whose aim is monetary success rather than the achievement of good work. In order that the Stage may be of educational value, it is necessary that those who follow its art should have an ideal standard somewhat above the average of contemporary taste. This standard should be ever in advance, so that as the taste and education of the public progress the means for their further advancement should be ready. To effect this some security is necessary. If the purifying and ennobling influence of the art is to be exercised in such a manner as to have a lasting power, it is necessary that the individual be replaced by something in the shape of a corporation, or by the working of some scheme by its nature fixed and permanent. It

would, I think, be at present unadvisable to touch upon the subject of State subsidy with reference to the British stage. The institutions of this country are so absolutely free that it would be dangerous,—if not destructive,—to a certain form of liberty to meddle with them. *Quid pro quo* is a maxim which holds good of State aids, and a time might come when an unscrupulous use might be made of the power of subsidy. Besides, in this country, the State would never grant monetary aid to individual enterprise under any guarantees whatsoever. As the State could not possibly of itself undertake establishment and management, the adoption of some corporate form would be necessary with reference to the stage before the question of subsidy could be raised with any possibility of success. A 'National Theatre' implies an institution which, in its nature, is not either limited or fleeting. Such a scheme must be thorough, must rest upon a very secure basis, and must conform to the requirements of art, polity, and commerce. It must be something which, in the ordinary course of things, will, without losing any of its purpose or any of its individuality, follow with equal footsteps the changes of the age. In order to do this it must be large, elastic, and independent. Let us consider these conditions. Firstly, as to magnitude. As the national theatre must compete with private enterprise, and be with regard to its means of achieving prosperity weighted with a scrupulosity which might not belong to its rivals, it should be so strong as to be able to merge in its steady average gain temporary losses, and its body should be sufficiently large to attempt and achieve success in every worthy branch of histrionic art. Secondly, the corporate body should be to a certain extent elastic. The production of talent in a country or an age is not always a fixed quantity; and whilst for the maintenance of a high standard of excellence no one manifestly under the mark of his fellows should be admitted, all those worthy of entrance should be absorbed. Thirdly, the National Theatre should be independent. Once established under proper guarantees, it should be allowed to work out its own ideas in its own way. Art can never suffer by the untrammelled and unshackled freedom of artists,—more especially when the idiosyncrasies of individuals, with the consequent possible extravagance, are controlled by the wisdom and calmness of confluent opinion. The difficulties of systematisation would be vast, but the advantages would be vast also. The merits of the concentration of purpose of men following kindred pursuits have been tested already, and the benefits both to individuals and the bodies are known. Our art alone has as yet, no local habitation, no official recognition, no political significance. Should the scheme of a National Theatre be

carried out, great results might follow,—much good to the great body of aspirants to histrionic fame. Provision might, at a small expense to each individual, be made for the widow and the orphan. Old age would be divested of the terrors of want. A restraining influence would be exercised on unscrupulousness. A systematic school of teaching would arise; and the stage would acquire that influence and position which, whatever they may be in the present, are to be in the future great."

MR. PHELPS AT THE GAIETY.

By John Hollingshead.

MR. PHELPS'S first appearance at the Gaiety Theatre was in the week before Christmas, 1873, when he was engaged to give eight special representations of certain old comedies in conjunction with Mr. Charles Matthews, Mr. J. L. Toole, Mr. Hermann Vezin, Mr. Lionel Brough, &c. He made his first entry as Dr. Cantwell in the *Hypocrite*, Mr. Toole playing Mawworm for the first time after a very short period of study, and the rest of the characters being represented by Miss Farren and members of the Gaiety Company. This piece was played for six nights to the largest receipts ever known at the theatre, and the following three nights were devoted to Colman's comedy of *John Bull*, with Mr. Phelps as Job Thornberry, Mr. Toole as Dennis Brulgruddery, Mr. Charles Mathews as the Hon. Tom Shuffleton, Mr. Hermann Vezin as Peregrine, and Mr. Lionel Brough as Dan, supported by the general company. The receipts were equally great for these performances, and the orchestra was utilized for extra stalls. Mr. Phelps, unlike Mr. Charles Mathews, did not consider himself injured by appearing in this combination, and this short preliminary engagement was the forerunner of many others which were equally pleasant and profitable to both of us. As in Mr. Charles Mathews's case there were no written agreements between us, but we perfectly understood each other's views; and from December 1873, to the day of Mr. Phelps's lamented death, he considered himself more or less engaged to me, and never thought of any public appearance without coming to consult me. At first I used his invaluable services at my Saturday matinées, and at these he played a number of his best comedy parts, intermixed with Cardinal Wolsey and Shylock. He avoided Sir Pertinax Macsycophant in *The Man of the World* for nearly four years, and I never pressed him to play it. He told me he thought it was the

most trying part in the whole range of the British drama, and when he felt physically equal to it he would let me know. The time came at last, after one of his long fishing holidays, and the result was a very fine performance of his great comic masterpiece.

When Mr. Toole went to America in 1874, and I had the Amphitheatre in Holborn and the Opera Comique in the Strand under my direction, in addition to the Gaiety, I was enabled to offer Mr. Phelps a night engagement at the Gaiety. We produced the *Merry Wives of Windsor* at Christmas, 1874, with scenery by Mr. Grieve, and original music by Mr. Arthur Sullivan. Mr. Phelps played Falstaff, and associated with him in the cast were Mr. Hermann Vezin, Mr. Arthur Cecil, Mr. Righton, Mr. J. G. Taylor, Mr. Belford (one of his old Sadler's Wells company), Mr. Forbes Robertson, Miss Furtado, Miss Rose Leclercq, and Mrs. John Wood. Probably the most pleasant member of the company was Mr. Phelps. He had an amiable faculty of "making himself at home." When he first joined the regular Gaiety company—a company not generally associated with the so-called "legitimate drama"—he behaved as if he had been amongst them all his life; and with the company mentioned above—some of them specially engaged for the *Merry Wives of Windsor*—he was soon on the very best of terms. Instead of sitting in state in his dressing-room, he passed much of his time in the green-room, and entered into all the little amusements of the place in the most pleasant manner. Fines were instituted to punish those who were found tripping in the text of Shakspere, and once or twice Mr. Phelps was caught (on evidence probably not very trustworthy), but he paid his fines cheerfully. The money was ultimately spent in a bowl of punch.

One result of his Gaiety engagement was that he was induced to come a little out of his domestic retirement. I persuaded him to become a member of the Garrick Club, and Mr. Arthur Cecil persuaded him to take a continental tour, as, with the exception of his visits to Berlin and Dresden, he had never been out of his own country. He was much impressed with Paris and Italy—with what he called the "stage-management" of the brilliant city, and the beauty of the Alpine scenery.

He played at the Gaiety during his various engagements, in addition to the parts previously mentioned, Sir Peter Teazle (repeatedly), Bottom the Weaver, Jacques, Lord Ogleby, Richelieu, &c. His mind was very active, and he was always ready to study a new part. At one time he thought of playing Bill Sykes in a proposed version of *Oliver Twist* by Mr. Andrew Halliday. If he had been ten or fifteen years younger, he would probably have taken a west-end theatre, and repeated the experiment which he

carried out so nobly at Sadler's Wells. He had no conservative prejudices against anything new, and the last time he was within the walls of a playhouse was at the Gaiety theatre.

ACTORS' FACES.

By Percy Fitzgerald.

JOHNSON once remarked that no man's face had had "such wear and tear" as Garrick's; and the expression could be applied generally to most actors. Barristers and physicians—men who seem to turn their faces, like their minds, to the critical questions they have to work out, silently acquire the intelligent air as of those who think and have thought: but the actor's face shows this wear and tear more pointedly, because he has to consider his face, as he thinks and feels, and tries, often instinctively, to make it correspond with what is within. These efforts, this old "purifying the passions with pity and terror," form a process that tells upon the lines and cordage of the face, as training does on the athlete; all the unintelligent fat and flesh seems to wear off. It is moreover some test of the truth of physiognomy, that all great actors have come to their profession with fine faces, that is with effective features, large and well cut, that offer shadows. Hardly one fails in this respect. Garrick, Kemble, Siddons, Kean, Macready, Miss Faucit, and in our day, Mr. Irving, all present faces that could be called remarkable. Talma, Rachel, Viardot, Garcia, Frederic Lemaître, with many more, are equally distinguished on the foreign stage.

But this characteristic is capable of extraordinary development with long and varied practice, the subject of this practice being the current of passions and emotions that belong to the regular and legitimate drama, be it comic or tragic. Hence with a course of burlesque or the placid, verbal humour of comedy of our own day, there is no wear and tear: there is nothing working within to disturb or influence the expression of the features. Garrick's face in pictures or busts, is truly remarkable, much, of course, being owing to his foreign blood, his father being a Frenchman. It is a massive face, not fat, though rounded, with a quick vivacity in the movements of the neck; eyes of startling brilliancy, with a darting searching expression, which he was fond of applying; with recesses about his lips, where lurked the humours of comedy; while in his brow, full and over-arching, lay vast tragic forces. The muscles of his cheeks seem flexible to an extraordinary degree, and were as expressive as any other part of

his action and his voice. These were prodigious advantages; but it is often forgotten that voice and gesture are but one department of acting and expression. Kemble and his sister were not so fortunate in the flexibility of their faces, but they supplied the want by grandeur of tones and bearing, by the majesty which breathed from their figure and glances. There is, of course, expression in a sustained solemnity of feature, which, to look on, excites emotion all the same. Macready too had his "noble Roman" or classical air, while Kean's smaller features were lit up with an almost ferocious vivacity. Mr. Irving, in our own day, is exceptionally gifted: the features being well cut, bold yet not prominent, and mobile to a singular degree; while within, are found singular powers of expression, passing from tenderness to a pleasant air of comedy, from thence to an almost Voltairean air of satire, and thence to a tragic fierceness. The eyes are wonderful, deeply set and yet not cavernous, full of brilliancy, and set off by well-arched brows. Mr. Phelps—it is sad to have to speak of him as "the late"—had the true comedy face; good forehead, with what would have been an expression of Caledonian shrewdness or pawkiness about the mouth, but which training and comedy had developed into an air of humorous sagacity. Latterly, as was to be expected, age had imparted a sort of gnarled look, which was not inappropriate to certain characters. In any shape, however, it was welcome, for it belonged to the true family. The speaking face is in itself comedy, and it stirs in no comedy association.

The late Mr. Compton and Charles Mathews—how busy the "fell Sergeant" has been of late behind the scenes!—were also thus gifted: Compton having what Lamb called a sort of dried "quince-like" look. It was indeed extraordinary, and hard to analyze too, what the effect of his appearance was. On the stage he was certainly unique. It was that perpetual aridity—which might be defined the quintessence of gravity,—the dryness of the face being supported by a corresponding dryness of speech, and flavour, and voice. We can well recall that peculiar in-sucking of his cheeks after each sentence, as though he were striving to make what was within drier still. There was a quaint angularity about his shoulders and neck. Altogether he was a delightful comedian ever welcome; and though a regular mannerist, he was always novel because genuine. His Ollapod was the richest, drollest, and driest of his impersonations. And Mathews!—In his face reigned *finesse;* the *air narquin* was in his delicate nostrils, which quivered with a sly malice. The face was singularly refined in the lines, and there was an airy nervousness at the corners of the lip, where you saw the satire fluttering before it took wing. But

his whole figure was expressive; the back of his head and neck, and his spare small back, which he was careful to turn on us occasionally during *The Game of Speculation*. How his spare coat clung into his spare figure! In his gait, too, there was an expression. No one could put such an air of refined enjoyment and good-humour into his face—an essential to good comedy. For thus is carried off that deliberate or matter-of-fact air which many sentiments would otherwise have. Douglas Jerrold, had he spoken his bitter epigrams with one intention and meaning, would have been kicked; but they were carried off by his air of good-humour aud good-will, as though he were only half in earnest. This too, it may be added, is the true way of acting Joseph Surface,—who would otherwise become a tedious stage villain.

Clarke—he called J., not the J. S., of whom presently—has one of these dry visages, and much of the Compton element. About his figure there is a quaint and quiet grotesqueness, in his face an intensity of expression, and about his mouth a drollery in reserve, which breaks out into a kind of rollicking grin which is specially his. His chief strength lies in an air of fixed gravity, which sometimes turns to one of consternation when some odd proposal is made to him; then his muscles become iron, and it seems as though no power on earth would relax them. His eyes, too, are full of meaning and humour, and twinkle merrily. He is very much the type of a French player. But of the twin Clarke—J. S.,—what is to be said? Such an emollient face, surely such rich enjoyment and fun, is seldom seen. The rapidity with which the changes are made, the return from boisterous laughter to instant gravity,—in this he is a unique. A favourite device of his is known to us all; a sort of chuckling is going on, the unctuous face is rippling in waves of enjoyment, he is getting familiar, when some remark is made,—an allusion to a wife of whom he is in awe, when, in a second, a livid terror fills his face. His eyes roll, the lips take an O shape, as if anxious to form words but cannot, his cheeks become red and distended, he seems hot with alarm. This change the playgoer will recall. His Major de Boots is full of such; and there is nothing more diverting on the stage than the gravity of his face and tones, as he reads, or attempts to read, the letter at the end of the piece. We are now somewhat familiarized to his ways, and the system of good actors, acting alone and "starring it" about the country, causes a satiety. But the entrance of a good humorous actor among other good actors in a good comedy, as it used to be in Old Haymarket days, added to his attraction. Their strength made his. J. S. Clarke, in Lamb's phrase, "makes faces," *i.e.*, according to the strict meaning. Indeed, he often recalls the essayist's marvellous

Munden. Does not this exactly portray our actor's? "There is one face of ——, one face of ——, one (but what a one it is!) of ——; but [Clarke] has none that you can properly pin down and call *his*. When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks, in unaccountable warfare with your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of features, like Hydra. He is not one, but legion; not so much a comedian as a company. If his name could be multiplied like his countenance, it might fill a play-bill. He, and he alone, literally *makes faces:* applied to any other person, the phase is a mere figure, denoting certain modifications of the human countenance. Out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces, as his friend Suett used for wigs, and fetches them out as easily. I should not be surprised to see him some day put out the head of a river-horse; or come forth a pewitt, or lapwing, some feathered metamorphosis." In this view there could be scarcely anything better of its kind than his display of varied expression in *My Wife's out;* a farce by Bunn, with that or some such name. *There* he plays on his own face as on an instrument, and shows all the extremes of comic distress, jealousy, rage, humour. It should be revived.

All this time there has been another face before us, which in its day was one of the most remarkable as an *athletic* face: need we say that this was the one belonging to John Baldwin Buckstone, —now, we are sorry to learn, rueful enough. A more singular face could not be devised—the intensely droll eyes set in their places a little crookedly, a delightfully grotesque nose, cheeks something after the pattern of cutlets, and whose muscles went up and down, delicately relaxed; and the mouth! That, drawing it over to one side, into a corner, as it were, until by the act a sort of money-box slit or aperture was made; with this difference, that the good things were projected out of it, instead of anything being dropped in;—that "twist," was special to himself. He had the patent, as it were, seeming to speak round a corner, or from *behind* his lip, as it were. When he stepped on the boards, the sight of that strangly-modelled face and the curious twang of his note filled all with delight. His head, too, is round as a ball, the hair "perkey," the walk in keeping.

Hill, with the rollicking "full-moon" face, is of the French type. On that stage there are and have been plenty of these large, unctuous drolls, whose twinkling eyes sparkle with fun and Falstaffian humour. These seem created to play Chamberlains, "Baillies," irate but henpecked monarchs. Hill's face always overflows with fun and jollity. He is especially ludicrous in cases of persecution, where he seems to appeal for sympathy, but receives none, as in the piece of

Peacock's Holiday. He belongs, too, to the region of old English farce, which it is not improbable may be revived again; a kind of boisterous "rough and tumble" but funny concatenation which was driven out by the French *Box and Cox* type of piece. Hill can be delightfully stolid, and stare with a stupid wonder. His Baillie in the *Bells of Corneville* was a most amusing and legitimate performance, and thoroughly up to the French standard. These large full faces might appear to refute the theory laid down at the beginning that the expressive muscles and nerves should be fined down. But intelligent and expressive eyes supply what is wanting. Nay, there is a welcome surprise and a contrast from such eyes being buried, as it were, in fleshly pits, little therefrom being expected. I recall a French player of this sort in one of the fairy pieces at the Gaîté, with whom was the character of a German speaking the usual German-French. This companion began to talk of his "horses" instead of his "hair," "chevaux" instead of "cheveux" with much amusing equivoque. His companion said not a word. But the round, red face conducted a perfect dialogue: at first all was hesitation, uncertainty, then distrust, suspicion, then wonder, then annoyance, his friend with some pique or even contempt at the lack of intelligence, repeating with prodigious emphasis "Sh *vaux, s'h' vaux,* sur ma *tête!*" On this the round face conveyed terror as of a lunatic. This went on for some ten minutes or so, the laughter of the audience growing *crescendo.* I suppose a more hilarious and enjoyable ten minutes could not have been spent. All were in good humour for the rest of the night. It was a trifle, but in it was the basis of good acting.

Mr. Vezin has well-cut features, and great intelligence, but not much play of expression. Mr. Ryder, a few years back, had a fine physiogomy, large features, full of intelligence. Mr. Barry Sullivan offers nothing remarkable in this direction. If others are not named, it is because they have not made this a speciality. Before me now is a collection of portraits of the French players, and it is amazing what a wealth of expression is contained in each visage. M. Got as Mercadet with an air of crafty persuasion—anxiety peeping through affected indifference. M. Lassouche with an exquisite finesse measuring all intently, while an epigram hovers on his lips. M. Delannoy, a smooth round head, with scarcely a hair, yet for all that so redeemed from the benevolent vacuity of the bald-headed man, so fined and refined, as to make that defect an advantage; every part being tight and strained, and alive with quivering expression. And it is to be noted in these French players' faces what a life there is in the lips—the idea being conveyed that some jest or keen remark is kept there caged, and eager to break

away. Here we have M. Lesueur, of the Gymnase, the typical old man of the stage, decayed, Voltairean—fancying himself attractive, and speaking in a husky plaintive voice. Here, too, is M. Christian, of the "Orfée," with a beak, sniffing nose, and a curled mouth full of sneer, and a kind of expression in the bushy tuft in the centre of his forehead; with M. Ravel, of the same house, with an expression something like that of our "J." Clarke: a sly listening smile, with the head bent down. M. Bressant has a quick, brisk vitality. M. Daubray, of the Bouffes, is a robust, fat, even treble-chinned, sinuous-cheeked mime; his mouth having a jug-shaped corner to speak out of, like Buckstone's. M. Berthellier, of the Variétés, recalls Lionel. The finest French actor's head was that of the great Frederick Lemaître, which was broad, massive, remarkable for the vast breadth of the upper lip, with masses of hair to match.

Of our actresses' faces I have not yet spoken. Unhappily we can have but a meagre show. Of pretty faces there are plenty; but how few of expression or intelligence! Miss Ellen Terry is at the moment, perhaps the most favoured in this line, though the face itself is small and the features thin—not favourable conditions, therefore, for the footlights. But what interest and real expression breathe from every movement—what tenderness, what a graceful sympathetic figure! Her movements, too, impulsive and girl-like, each dictated by nature; whilst playing hoyden, or as the boisterous maiden, she always contrives to awaken this sympathy, as who should say: "Below there is seriousness and earnestness; these are but defects on the surface." We might wish the mouth a little smaller, and the laugh a little more harmonious. But these are specks. Miss Ada Cavendish, too, has a fine classical face; but true power of expression is lacking, as well as that power of evoking the sympathy of her hearers. This may come of consciousness and of trying to do too well. Mrs. Vezin has a good stage face, worthy of the sonnd, highly good acting she gives. Mrs. Bancroft, ever satisfactory and, where piquancy is wanted, has a whole range of expression ready; witness her mocking laugh turning to gravity, her sharp turns of the head, her pertness, her visible struggles with conflicting feelings, when a scene is going on, as in *Sweethearts*, where she wished to call back her lover and could not. Even in her late character of the adventurous Zicka, her superiority was evident, when a substitute came to take the character; it was a different thing altogether. Mrs. Kendal is pleasing and graceful, and has a charming mocking smile. No one could be better suited to modern comedy.

Portraits.

X.—MR. FARREN.

NEARLY a hundred years ago, as we learn from the *Diary of a Lady of Quality*, a curious incident occurred at Drury Lane Theatre. The play was *The School for Scandal*, with Miss Farren as Lady Teazle. The actress had no sooner stepped behind the screen than a gentleman who had been watching her performance left his box and joined her. He was the Earl of Derby, and, though married, was in love, like many others, with the elegant and piquante actress. If the screen had only fallen a little too soon! In 1797 the Countess departed this life, and after a short interval Miss Farren became Lady Derby. The late Earl, the "Rupert of debate," was her son. The noted comedian who is associated in the minds of old playgoers with Lord Ogleby and other figures in the comedy of the eighteenth century, and who retired from the stage in 1855, belonged to the same family as this not unfortunate lady; and it is his son who forms the subject of the present sketch. Mr. William Farren, *fils*, made his first appearance on the stage in the year 1850, at the Strand Theatre, then under his father's management. He next went to the Olympic, and in 1853 was engaged to play Captain Absolute in *The Rivals*, at the Haymarket. Though, as is well known, the standard of acting at that theatre was very high, his performance gave satisfaction; and for fourteen years he held a good position in the efficient company which Mr. Buckstone gathered around him. In 1867 or 1868, after fulfilling a brief engagement at the Lyceum Theatre, Mr. Farren made two provincial tours, one with Miss Nelly Moore, and the other with Mr. Byron. He did not reappear in London until 1870, when he was selected by Mrs. John Wood to represent the wicked old butterfly Brizard, in Mr. Augustin Daly's version of *Frou-Frou*, at the St. James's Theatre. Thence he proceeded to the Vaudeville, where, notwithstanding the long runs of the pieces in which he took part, he achieved many successes. His impersonations of Sir Peter Teazle and old Dornton displayed his talents at their best. In *Our Boys* he was Sir Geoffry Champneys, artistically relieving the baronet's usual severity of aspect and pride of birth by many touches of true feeling. It was not until last summer that he relinquished the cha-

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Faithfully yours
William Farren

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racter. The little holidays taken by Mr. James and Mr. Thorne were many and pleasant, but for more than eleven hundred consecutive nights Mr. Farren was to be found at his post. "There is *the* hero of the evening," said Mr. E. L. Blanchard behind the scenes at the theatre on the thousandth night of the play, as Sir Geoffry was waiting to go on in the last act. Recently, having taken what he not unreasonably regarded as a well-earned holiday, the actor appeared at the Aquarium Theatre in two characters which his father had made his own—Grandfather Whitehead and Young Wilding. In the words of a thoughtful writer in the *Athenæum*, Mr. Farren is a conscientious and a competent actor, wanting little that experience and nothing that diligence can supply. We have now, since the death of Mr. Phelps, not more than one man as capable of giving effect to an equal number of comedies concerning which traditions and memories still survive. Like many, it may almost be said most, of those artists concerning whom the public is most interested, Mr. Farren has passed through every phase of condemnation or indifference, to find appreciation slowly settle upon and around him. When first he claimed the suffrages of the public, no great indulgence was accorded him. During many years he was spoken of by his friends as a hard, and his enemies as a wooden, actor. It was only when middle age had been reached, and the character of the *jeune premier* had been abandoned, he began to establish himself in general favour. Since that time he has advanced to the front in public esteem. Some encouragement in the prosecution of an arduous career must have been afforded him by the fact, for which necessarily we are indebted to hearsay, that his career is identical with that of his father, whose *répertoire* he has of late commenced to play. It is characteristic of the best vintages that they are the longest in maturing. Judged by this standard, Mr. Farren must be an exceedingly fine wine, since now, after a quarter of a century's incessant practice, he is still far from ripe. His method is formed, and he shows a knowledge of the springs of pathos. Still, the entire command of them is not yet his, and his art must still be pronounced crude. It is much to be feared that it will be the same with him as we have known it with other artists, and that the finishing grace to his style will be given only by infirmity. Of the manner in which the elder Farren acted in *Grandfather Whitehead* the younger preserves a faithful copy, and those who see the bowed figure and the drooping venerable head might almost believe that the father still survived. There is, however, something wanting in the matter of pathos, and pathos is the point in which his father's reputation stood highest.

Feuilleton.

MY FIRST CRITIQUE.

By L. F. Austin.

I SUPPOSE there is not one of us who has not had the weakness early in life to treasure the first compositions which he gave to an appreciative public. Those articles which were timidly proffered to a hard-hearted editor, and were thought worthy of the dignity of print—how tenderly they were pasted in that volume of newspaper "cuttings," bought specially for the purpose, and cherished as if its contents were a priceless contribution to literature! I know a journalist who, although somewhat advanced in years, regards his lucubrations with undiminished affection, and regularly sends them to his friends marked with a blue border. The majority of us are, of course, incapable of such senile infatuation, and when we have written anything, trouble ourselves no more about it, or about other people's opinion of it, than if it were a tub or something equally remote from one's pride of intellect.

But the essays of our youth—the offspring of our budding fancy—with them it was different. I well remember my brief ecstasy over my first effort as a dramatic critic in the columns of the *Tortoisetown Alarum*. This composition was long preserved, not simply on account of its intrinsic merit, which I believed to be remarkable, but chiefly because of the very singular circumstances in which it saw the light. I do not expect the reader to credit the story I am about to relate; but, at all events, I am sure he will be charitable enough to give it a place in that borderland between truth and fiction in which so many strange tales have found an asylum.

Tortoisetown was a commercial centre of some importance, but though business was pretty active, there was very little progress of any other kind. People seemed to go about with cotton-wool in their ears, deaf to all appeals save those of profit and loss. Of intellectual life there was little or none. Few of the highly respected townsmen you met on 'Change had penetrated further into current literature than the money article. Of abuses there were plenty, but it was difficult to get anybody to pay any heed

to them. In fine, the higher instincts of men seemed in Tortoise-town to be almost stagnant.

Such was the state of things prior to the appearance of the *Alarum*. The editor and proprietor of that journal was a man whose nature it was to strike at ignorance and expose unfounded pretence wherever he found them. Very soon the sluggish pulse of Tortoisetown began to beat rather quickly under the stimulus of his vigorous criticism. He was a regular fire-eater of an editor, for though the days of ducking were past, it was open to any aggrieved citizen to call at the *Alarum* office with a horsewhip, and nobody availed himself of this privilege. There was something in the editorial physique in presence of which the most violent indignation subsided with remarkable celerity. There were a good many libel actions, and the *Alarum* had often to pay the penalty of being just and outspoken, but each misfortune provoked a substantial manifestation of public sympathy, and the circulation of the paper steadily increased. The energy of its fearless editor had roused a considerable number of people in Tortoisetown from their apathy, while there were many more who were ready to support anybody who provided them with the novel entertainment of racy criticism of those in authority.

I was beginning to feel an interest in journalism in those days, and the style of writing in the *Alarum*, the strong nervous periods and the biting sarcasm, fired me with an unquenchable desire to pitch into somebody or something. To move about the town with the consciousness that everybody I met was, in a certain sense, under my thumb, and that I could expose his misdemeanours, if he had any, to the world; to sit in a railway carriage beside some elderly malefactor, who could not suspect that the person who politely handed him his parcels when he got out was a tremendous engine of retribution—this to my mind was power.

I contrived to obtain a letter of introduction to the editor of the *Alarum*, and I went one day in a highly nervous condition to present myself. I found this journalistic Hercules discussing a tankard of ale as he sat in his shirtsleeves, while an empty tankard opposite to him denoted the recent presence of another party to the argument. The editor was not a polished man. His previous history was such as gave some colour to the shocking story that he had once been a working stonemason.

"So you want to write?" he said in a gruff, but not unkindly voice, when he had looked at my credentials. "Well, what can you do?"

I timidly handed him a bundle of abortions which I had brought

with me as specimens of my literary accomplishments. Over these he bent a pair of great shaggy eyebrows.

"Hum! 'The History of Boadicea;' 'Was the Execution of Charles I. Justifiable?' 'The Spanish Armada'; 'Who was Junius?' Not exactly subjects for the *Alarum*, Mr. Tirve!"

I hastily deprecated the idea that I had for a moment imagined that they could possibly be published in that journal, though, all the same, disappointment made (figuratively) a meal of my vitals, as the fox did those of the Spartan boy.

"Well, do you know anything of politics?" he asked. "There's the Budget. Suppose you write me an article about that."

I knew rather less about the Budget than I did of the Milky Way. I think he must have gathered this from the expression of my open countenance.

"Or," he continued, "let us look at local matters. The water question is in a very unsatisfactory state. Of course you read Alderman Pewter's speech in which he said that this demand for a better water-supply was a base Radical dodge. You might touch him up for that. Give a few statistics, you know, to show why more water is necessary to the town."

"Oh yes, I understand," I said, while a miserable sensation of incompetence seemed to rise from the pit of my stomach.

The visage of Hercules had up to this point been serious, not to say stern, but a gleam of merriment now flashed from under the brows, and the editor of the *Tortoisetown Alarum* laughed.

"No, my boy, that's nothing but my fun. You will have to dig a good while before you get to water, eh? We must find you pleasanter work than that. What you want now is to give rein to your fancy. My dramatic critic is laid up this week, and there's a performance by a new company at the theatre to-morrow night. Go and see it, and let me have your impressions the next morning."

Go and see a play and write a critique! I felt as if some benevolent sprite had invited me to take an excursion skywards on a cloud. For a moment fear almost made me stammer out an excuse; then ambition braced up my nerves. I would do it!

I walked out of the office of the *Alarum* unconscious of locomotion. As I strode along the streets, the passers-by took extraordinary shapes. Presently a red streak darted across my sight. It was a poster which intimated in prodigious type that on the following evening *Hamlet* would be performed at the Theatre Royal, and that Mr. Reginald Fitzdagger would appear as the princely

Dane, and Miss Eleanor Debowle as Ophelia. It was strange, but a presentiment struck me at once that these people would prove themselves impostors. With difficulty I restrained myself from admitting a neighbouring small boy into my confidence, and exclaiming, "Ha! they think they'll take us by storm, do they? But I'm the critic of the *Tortoisetown Alarum*, and I'm going to smash them!"

Turning away, I stumbled against a tall gaunt man with a hooked nose, who had on his arm a lady, the bloom of whose complexion suggested that she had seen more summers than she wished the public to conjecture. They, too, were staring at the advertisement with all their might.

"Ho! sirrah, have a care!" exclaimed the gaunt man. I think I had trodden on his corn, but he looked at me as if I had done nothing short of casting an aspersion on his pedigree.

"Shure, now, it was an accident," interposed the lady. Then smiling graciously at me, she said, "You were looking at the poster, sir. Shure, it's an illegant poster!"

As a matter of courtesy to a woman, I conceded that it was. "Perhaps, now, ye have never seen *Hamlet* [she pronounced it *Hamlut*] leastways with rale artists?"

As a dramatic critic I could not submit to such a slur upon my knowledge, so I said that I had seen everybody of note in the play, but that as for Fitzdagger and Debowle, "though they may do very well in a barn, you know, they can't expect the cultivated public of Tortoisetown to put much faith in them!"

When you are engaged in a casual street conversation, it is important that you should bring the dialogue to an effective close with some remark which illustrates your wit, or good humour, or superior judgment. I flattered myself that my observations would leave an impression on the gaunt man and his companion, so I immediately walked on with the air of one who had been dispensing wisdom free of charge.

All that day and all the next I was in an increasing fever of excitement. I read the play several times, pictured to myself the attitudes of Mr. Fitzdagger and the gestures of Miss Eleanor Debowle, and prepared cutting epigrams on both. As my brain grew more heated, I drank a great deal of green tea, and the result was that not a lighter-headed young man could have been found in the three kingdoms. The first night I did not sleep at all. When the next evening came—the evening of the performance—my nervous system was in such a disordered state that I could have summoned spirits from the vasty deep, and have felt quite assured that I saw them come.

Before going to the theatre I endeavoured to get into a more composed frame of mind by snatching a brief slumber. I must have lost consciousness for a while, but presently I rose and set out for the town, which was about two miles distant. The walk in the cool night air, I thought, would do me good, but I supposed that in my excitement I made extraordinary haste, as I arrived at the theatre in a considerably shorter time than I could otherwise have credited.

Another curious circumstance was, that the poster I had seen on the previous day made itself very conspicuous all the way, and in the most unlikely places. For instance, I could have sworn that I saw it on the door of a Dissenting chapel, where, a few Sundays before, it had been asserted that theatres were the "purlieus of perdition." But I set down this singular vision as one of the effects of the green tea, and regretted that I had taken so much of that disorganizing beverage.

There were not many people in the house, and all the faces, except one, were strange to me. I was surprised and agitated to see the editor of the *Alarum* amongst the audience. "He is going to check my criticism by his own impressions," I thought, and the idea was alarming. I tried to attract his attention, but he never looked once in my direction. Twice I made my way to his seat, but each time something drew him to another part of the theatre before I could reach him. And, stranger still, he did not, during the whole evening, pay the slightest attention to the performance, but looked as if he were cogitating an article on the water question.

But the oddest thing of all was the appearance of the gaunt man as Hamlet, and of the lady with the dubious complexion as Ophelia. I rubbed my eyes, but there was no mistake. There they were, and furthermore, they evidently recognized me, for they stared in a manner which was decidedly unfriendly. Remembering the sarcastic utterance with which I had parted from them the day before, I felt exceedingly uncomfortable under this persistent gaze; and when Hamlet, affirming that "there's ne'er a villain in all Denmark but he's an arrant knave," and that "a man may smile and smile and be a villain," and all the other cheerful things about his peccant uncle, looked pointedly at me, I fully expected that the audience would imagine that I was some desperate criminal who ought not to be at large. But nobody took the smallest notice, and indeed every one except myself seemed to regard the performance with the utmost apathy.

It was clear to me that the acting of Mr. Fitzdagger and Miss Debowle was about as bad as it could be, but of the rest of the company I could retain no definite impression; indeed,

I could not remember any of them from one act to another. No doubt the green tea had something to do with this, but I decided that the insignificance of the people in question was the chief cause. I was fully alive, however, to the course of the play, and when Ophelia, in the famous scene with Hamlet, as she returned to him the presents, came out with the original remark, "Shure, now, they're illigant tokens!" I was convulsed by the joke which, strange to say, no one else appeared to perceive.

I returned home, if possible, with greater speed than I had come, and sat down at once to indite my criticism. It was a terrible article. I said that the Hamlet mouthed and the Ophelia minced; that for tragedy an actor needed a voice which was not like the premonitory rumblings of an earthquake; that as there were no Hibernian ejaculations in the play Miss Debowle ought to limit the expression of her sentiments to the text; and much more in the same vein. I must have gone to sleep in the middle of it; for when I came to myself it was nearly midday, and the manuscript was lying before me, unfinished and scarcely legible. I hurriedly completed it, and hastened with mingled anxiety and pride to the office of the *Alarum*.

It was the day for going to press, but it happened that business had called the editor away, and it was uncertain at what hour he would return. I left my "copy" in the care of a youthful "devil," who was much diverted by my solicitude for its safety. Then I took a long walk into the country, and wandered about till nightfall; torturing myself with gloomy speculations as to the fate of my precious article,—such as that the "devil" had dropped it into the fire, or that it had got into the lining of the editor's coat, and had slipped through a hole into some gutter to experience the tender mercies of the Corporation dustmen.

The next morning a neighbouring newsagent, who was taking down his shutters, was startled by the apparition of a haggard young man, who in hoarse accents demanded a copy of the *Alarum*, and, glancing hastily at the paper, uttered a cry of joy and vanished. It was there, but it was much changed. Some of my most cutting sentences had disappeared. But though expressions were modified or omitted, the opinion pronounced was allowed to stand. I had passed judgment upon Fitzdagger and Debowle, and derision was henceforward their portion in Tortoisetown.

I read my effusion again and again with unabated interest. I dogged several people in the course of the morning, and watched them read it. This was happiness, but conceive my emotion when the paper was handed from one person to another until there was a group of about a dozen eagerly studying the same thing, while

shouts of laughter attested its success. I felt at that moment that anonymous journalism was a mistake, and longed to proclaim myself to these enthusiastic admirers and receive their homage.

With these blushing honours thick upon me, I thought it would be politic to present myself to the editor. At the door of the office I heard familiar voices in full blast. The funereal bass of Fitzdagger and the shrill pipe of Debowle were creating discord in the editor's room. What could it mean?

The "devil" appeared. "Oh!" he said, "I was just going for you. There's an awful shindy inside, and you're wanted!"

The chill of impending evil passed through me. I went in. There stood the gaunt man with fury in his aspect, and there too was Ophelia, without her bloom, but with cheeks inflamed with the unmistakably genuine hue of wrath.

"This is the man," said the editor, who, though quite collected, was evidently a good deal disturbed.

"Ho! there! we have met before, sirrah!" exclaimed Hamlet.

"That him!" shrieked Ophelia. "Why he blackguarded us to our faces in the street before he saw us act, he did, the spalpeen!"

"Keep cool, if you please, Miss Debowle," remonstrated the editor, "and let us hear what Mr. Tirve has to say. Were you at the theatre the night before last?" he said, addressing me.

"Certainly," I replied; "and you were there too. I saw you."

Amazement was pictured on the faces of all three.

"Why, of all the barefaced, audacious ——" began Ophelia, but the editor checked the outburst.

"Wait a moment," he said. "As I am also involved in the mystery, let me unravel it. Do you mean seriously to tell me, Mr. Tirve, that you saw *me* at the theatre?"

"Most assuredly, and at least two hundred others." I was getting warm under this strange examination.

"Why, what has come over you, my boy? Don't you know that *there was no performance that night?*"

I sat petrified. A dreadful idea flashed through my brain. No performance! Then, it must have been ——. No, that was impossible. I made one more struggle.

"I tell you I—I saw it," I gasped. "I saw these persons act, but"—here the new thought burst out in spite of me—"it may have been in a dream!"

It was. The green tea and fevered nerves had done it all. However, I was not to lose much by my weakness. The editor, having mollified the players, good-naturedly overlooked the matter, but in order to cool my head put me on the water question for three weeks.

En Passant.

THE French Minister of Public Instruction, M. Bardoux, has addressed an important letter to the managers of the Parisian theatres. "For some time," he says, "the public mind has been disquieted by the sensible *abaissement* observable in certain manifestations of the dramatic and lyrical arts, and many persons whose opinions are worthy of respect attribute this decadence to the industrial freedom extended to the theatres by the decree of the 6th January, 1854. The evil being undeniable, it becomes my duty to seek a remedy. Three considerable interests are involved in the question, and have equally occupied my thoughts—the interest of art, that of the public, and that of the artistes. To assure to the last the just reward of their labours, to provide the public with inoffensive entertainments, and to restore to the dramatic and lyrical arts, if it is possible, the *ton* which formerly gave our theatres so legitimate a reputation—these are the objects to which my efforts must be directed. By way of making my task easier, I wish to receive all the information on the subject that can be given, and with this view put myself in communication with all those whose experience in such matters is beyond doubt. I shall be much obliged, therefore, if you will acquaint me with your personal views as to the *régime* established by the decree of 1854. What have been its advantages and the disadvantages? What effect has it had on the composition of theatrical companies, orchestras, and choruses? Should it be maintained as it is? In what respect may it be amended? What *régime* could be put in its place? In short, I should be glad if you would send me all the remarks which you may deem likely to throw light on the points at issue. I shall receive them with gratitude, and will give them the closest consideration." Two questions occur to us as we read this letter. Is it desired to restore the old *régime*, or are the Government simply desirous to elevate the moral tone of the French drama?

SCENE, Birmingham. Madame Nilsson, who has concertized the night before, discovered sitting in her hotel boudoir. Enter servant. "Madame, a gentleman who waits below requested me to give you this card." Madame takes a pasteboard and reads: "Reginald Smithers, Manager, Theatre Royal, Birmingham." "Show him in." Exit waiter. Enter local manager. "Aw, I have the pleasure of addressing Madame Nilsson. I heard you sing in our Town Hall last night. Now, as I know you can act as well as you can sing, I want to engage you for my theatre." "Why, my good man, I am a singer and not an actress." "What makes you say that, madame! Do you suppose I haven't heard of your playing Juliet, Viola,

and Isabella?" "My good man, you are thinking of Miss Adelaide Neilson; my name's Christine Nilsson." Exit local manager. Such is fame!

The ex-king Fernando, of Portugal, recently visited Milan, but has since left for Paris. Among the artistes with whom he spent some time, was Signor Schira, for whom his Majesty professes particular esteem. His Majesty's wife, who, as Mdlle. Hensler, sang with much applause in 1855–56 at the Scala, begged her old singing-master, Signor Sagiovanni, to call on her, received him in the most courteous manner, and introduced him to her husband.

Some misconceptions as to the origin of *La Grâce de Dieu*, now being played at the Gaîté, have been cleared up by M. Auguste Vitu. The piece is not an imitation of *Fanchon la Vieilleuse*, as many suppose. For some time after 1832 one of the lionesses of Paris society was Mdlle. Loïsa Paget, who was in the habit of singing songs of her own composition in the salons, and who, in 1836, produced at the Salle Favart a comic opera entitled *Le Mauvais Œil*. The librettist was M. Gustave Lemoine, afterwards her husband. In 1840 she composed the song "La Grâce de Dieu," from which we take the following:—

Tu vas quitter notre montage,
Pour t'en aller bien loin, hélas!
Et moi, ta mère et ta campagne,
Je ne pourrai suivre tes pas.
Les filles que Dieu vous envoie,
Vous les gardez, gens de Paris;
Nous, pauvres mères de Savoie,
Nous les chassons loin du pays,
En leur disant adieu!
À la grâce de Dieu!

The song immediately became the rage, and it was the lines we have quoted that suggested to M. d'Ennery the central idea of the play alluded to.

The Rev. B. F. de Costa has sent the New Shakspere Society a paper on the "Source of *The Tempest*," which will be read at an early meeting. Mr. de Costa, the *Athenæum* says, finds this source in the manuscript of William Strachey, finished July 16, 1610, giving an account of "A most dreadful *Tempest* [the manifold deaths whereof are here to the life described], their Wreck on Bermuda, and the description of these Islands." Strachey was living in Blackfriars in 1612, and engaged in literary pursuits; and his MS. is supposed by Mr. de Costa to have been seen by Shakspere before it was printed by Purchas many years after. It has a monster, a wizard, a Stephen, &c.

The following statistics relative to the amusements of Paris are obtained from the report of M. Vergniaud, *chef du cabinet* of the Prefect of Police. Old and new Paris at present possesses 48 principal theatres. The Châtelet has the largest number of seats, 3,500. Then come in order

the Théâtre Historique, 2,500; the Opéra, 2,100; the Château d'Eau, 2,000; the Ambigu-Comique, 1,900; the Gaîté and the Porte St. Martin, each 1,800; the Opéra Comique, 1,500; the Odéon, 1,467; the Comédie-Française, 1,380. The Opéra has the most numerous personnel, consisting of 95 musicians, 26 singers, 18 female singers, 7 male dancers, 42 danseuses, 92 chorists or figurants, 87 sujets for the ballet, 155 machinists, 40 ouvreuses and the cashiers or contrôleurs; making a total minimum of 596 persons. The Porte St. Martin employs 359 men and women, the Châtelet 300, the Opéra Comique 239, the Comédie-Française 220. In the 26 principal theatres of Paris 3,210 men and 1,859 women are employed. This total figure, 5,069, is made up of 1,777 male artistes, 1,032 female artistes, 428 employés, 568 machinists, 671 placers or ouvreuses, and 613 special workmen. The theatre which has the most varied repertory is the Française, which during the past year played 76 pieces; the Gymnase comes next with 58 pieces, the Palais Royal with 46, and the Odéon with 40.

THE *New York Times* says that one of the passengers on an out-going steamer was William Shakspere, a name that is almost never heard except in connection with the greatest dramatist and poet of all time. There are, we believe, some families of Shakspere in Warwickshire, the natal county of *the* poet; but none of them claim any descent from or relationship to him. A man cannot help his name; but if any ordinary or ordinary-extraordinary man inherit the world-renowned patronymic, we cannot conceive of his retaining the William part. To bear such an immortal name is enough to paralyse anybody's energy and ambition. What could its possessor accomplish that would not render him contemptible by contrast? Any parental Shakspere who would call his or her son William would be guilty of a sin compared with which filicide would be a slight transgression. No sensitive mortal could or would live under such designation. To be Shakspere in name, and the very reverse of Shakspere in nature, as 9,999 out of any 10,000 persons must inevitably be, would be sufficient to render entire seclusion welcome and death a priceless boon.

A PRIVATE letter from Rome says that negotiations are in progress by an Italian agent, representing an American manager, with Fera Giovanni, the tenor, to quit the cloister and enter upon a professional life. The monk is said to sing more enchantingly than he did a few months ago. The Romans are in ecstasies over him, and declare that his voice has all the excellencies combined which Tamberlik, Mario, Giuglini, and Nicolini have ever shown. He listens most willingly to the secular overtures made to him, and his eyes glisten when he hears the enormous sums he can earn by going upon the stage. He still vows, however, that he will not leave the cloister; that he cannot break his vows for any earthly consideration. But the agent who is operating on him has complete confidence in securing him. An Italian himself, he says he knows his countrymen.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

IT is significant of the dulness this year of the theatrical season, which is supposed to commence at about Michaelmas, and to be full of life in November, that the only important new play of the month should be the production of a lady playwright with no previous experience of stage work. That the authoress of *A Republican Marriage* should be what is called a "fashionable amateur" need not, of course, be held detrimental to her work; but, as it chances, the drama itself is, both in its faults and its merits, characteristic of the source whence it springs. The new play, which is from the pen of Mrs. Holford, is in theory, at all events, original; that is to say, it is not an adaptation from the French. But the reminiscences which it has suggested to those who have seen it at its tentative afternoon performances at the Olympic are many and varied. *The Lady of Lyons, Les Danicheff, Jean Dacier,* and *L'Atelier du Lys,* all appear to have been laid under contribution, either consciously or unconsciously, by the authoress; and the list is one which might be added to without difficulty. In addition to the lack of creative power thus implied, the authoress of *A Republican Marriage* is unfortunately deficient in literary skill, for her play is poorly written and her dialogue is singularly uninteresting. But with both these defects the new play has the advantage of a capital story, full of effective situations and of opportunities for good acting. Its writer obviously possesses the dramatic tact and perception for want of which so many far more cultivated dramatists are utterly unsuccessful. The position of a high-born heroine married by a revolutionary mob to a workman is one which compels interest, especially when it is contrived that, while the strangely-assorted couple live as brother and sister, the possibilities of mutual love between them are deftly insinuated. How the girl falls in love with her humble preserver, and how he legitimately gains, in her eyes, more and more of the attributes of the chivalrous hero, need not be told in detail; but something more than passing regret must be expressed for the final mistake of causing the *soi-disant* workman to turn into a nobleman. This feeble expedient appears to remove us with a wrench from the society of such people as Osif and the hero of *All for Her* into that of the virtuous but incomprehensible aristocrats of the *London Journal*. *A Republican Marriage* is undeniably a work of some little promise, and it would be of a great deal more if that which strikes us as new in the story were not so inferior to that which looks like a *réchauffé* of old materials. At the Olympic it had every chance of making a favourable mark, for Miss Marion Terry entered into the part of the heroine with delightful delicacy of feeling, and indicated with natural art the mental conflict in the mind of a girl who is torn by simultaneous emotions of gratitude, pride, nascent love, maidenly modesty. More conventionally than Miss Terry, but still

with thoroughly appropriate spirit, Mr. H. Neville portrayed one of the manly heroes so often sketched by him; and a good word is deserved for Mr. Macklin's conscientious sketch of deep-dyed villany.

Mr. H. J. Byron and Mr. F. C. Burnand, our two best writers of burlesque pure and simple, without any *arrière pensée*, and with no object save the production of easy laughter, have each given us a new dramatic joke, the one at the Gaiety and the other at the Royalty. Between *Over-Proof, or what was found in A Celebrated Case*, and *Young Fra Diavolo* there does not seem much to choose. Neither piece is in its author's happiest vein, but both are likely to be popular, inasmuch as they follow favourite lines with the assured ease born of long practice on the part of those who direct their course. In Auber's opera Mr. Byron finds a subject which years ago he treated in a vein of parody in his *Fra Diavolo, or Beauty and the Brigands*, and Mr. Burnand has perhaps a slight advantage over him in that the object of his good-humoured chaff has just now a more prominent place in the attention of the public. If any one should know where are the weak places in the popular Adelphi melodrama, it should be the author or adapter of *Proof;* and the story of that eminently serious play is more susceptible of humorous treatment than in an operatic libretto which already has extravagance enough of its own. Mr. Byron, however, has accomplished with plenty of spirit what would be to most people a weary task, and has for the second time made an hour or two of fun out of the materials at his command. His verbal twists are as astonishing as ever, and more to the purpose still is the curious accuracy with which he fits every member of the company for which he writes with a suitable part. The Gaiety audiences seem to recollect that they are seated in what was once a music-hall; they love the good old-fashioned break-down, the formal comic song of the "duettists," and the chorus which has become a favourite with whistling street-boys. *Young Fra Diavolo* is accordingly full of dance and song; and in more than one of the dances Miss Kate Vaughan is able to prove herself the *première danseuse* of the burlesque stage. Her movements as Zerlina are full of a grace not often seen in such efforts, and in other respects she is as fascinating a heroine of burlesque as could be wished. Miss Farren, who bears herself bravely as the distinguished robber-chief, gives full point to the contrast between her appearance and her utterances, and Messrs. Terry and Royce, as Beppo and Giacomo, give a Whitechapel version of Italian brigandage. Mr. Royce in particular gives real dramatic force to his repulsive sketch of a cowardly rough, and a drunken dance in which he makes that worthy indulge is extremely clever of its kind. For the rest, pretty faces, pretty dresses, and pretty music go a long way towards atoning for what may seem to those who are not fascinated by this species of entertainment the needless length of the performance. It may be noted that in the earlier portion of the evening Mr. Terry appears as Paul Pry, with the success which he has before made in that famous rôle, whilst Miss Kate Lawler is a lively Phœbe, and Mr. Maclean is as usual an excellent Colonel Hardy.

Over Proof would be welcome if only as an indication that the management of the Royalty is passing from disease to health. Its innocent merriment, pure nonsense though much of it is, comes to us like a breath of fresh air after the impure atmosphere of *Marjolaines* and *Parfumeuses*. That Mr. Anson is extremely amusing in his skit upon Mr. Arthur Sterling's manner of playing the villain Lazare need scarcely be said. Whether such parodies are in their essence in good taste we need not stay to discuss, and it must suffice to note that Mr. Anson's skilful caricature is at any rate not unamiable. Miss Kate Santley as Adrienne, "only five," is entertaining, without, we are glad to say, any suggestiveness or vulgarity, and Mr. W. H. Fisher's Lorance is good, in that it makes the most out of not very promising materials. Miss Parker and Miss Rose Roberts are both valuable recruits, inasmuch as they catch the spirit of genuine extravaganza.

A Catalogue of the recent doings at Drury Lane theatre gives an impression more favourable than accurate of the achievements of the season. Tragedies such as *Othello* and *Macbeth*, a stirring melodrama like *Belphegor*, and a bright comedy like *The Jealous Wife*, sound well in the *résumé* of a month, and the national theatre seems at first sight to be accomplishing worthily its varied work. But, alas! the disillusion comes the moment a closer and more critical examination of the series of performances is made. We discover that the actor who was at best an unsatisfactory Leontes is a still less interesting Macbeth, and is an Othello completely grotesque in his badness. A worse Shaksperian performance than this last on the part of Mr. Charles Dillon it has rarely been our lot to witness, and the actor's treatment of the Moor's passion, more particularly in the earlier stages of his jealousy, only escapes from being positively painful by being laughable. The faults of what is known as the "old school" seemed to be deliberately burlesqued, and yet it must be confessed that plenty of playgoers were found in the crowded house to applaud to the echo the singular elocution and the extraordinary vocal noises with which the actor thought fit to accompany his remarkable gestures and grimacing. It is very certain that if Mr. Dillon is right in believing that Othello was in the habit of expressing emotion after this fashion, the Venetian senators were wrong in the serious view which they seem to have taken of their valued General. The Iago of Mr. Ryder, though a sound and useful performance, was not able to afford the compensation for the faults of the representation which was supplied in *Macbeth* by Mrs. Hermann Vezin's fine rendering of Lady Macbeth. Her Emilia, too, was both sympathetic and highly-finished. She and Miss Genevieve Ward seem the only two actresses capable of doing what should be done with rôles such as these. Mrs. Vezin's large share too in the representation of *The Jealous Wife* far surpassed in interest the revival of *Belphegor*, though this latter play naturally shows Mr. Dillon to far more advantage than do loftier efforts. Colman's comedy, notwithstanding the fact that it suffers as a work of art from its now usual compression into three acts, goes with a brightness to which the stage of Drury Lane has not of late been accustomed. The feminine tantrums of Mrs. Oakley, as illustrated by

the accomplished actress who knows how to make this species of humour tell with force, keep the house in a simmer of appreciative amusement; and the well-timed revival deserves to be regarded as a treat not to be lightly missed. Mr. John Ryder as the Major, and Mr. J. C. Cowper as Oakley, are both thoroughly equal to the labours entrusted to them, and in all respects save one the performance reached a fair level.

The Aquarium *matinées* have been devoted to a species of *tour de force* on the part of Mr. W. Farren, who has appeared every afternoon both as Grandfather Whitehead and Young Wilding in *The Liar*. His effort can, upon the whole, scarcely be pronounced more than creditable; for neither the pathos of the one part nor the juvenile dash of the other is quite within the actor's range. The former play, which was made by Mr. Farren's father, is at best a feeble and uninteresting piece, which can have been valuable only for the opportunity which it gave to an actor with "tears in his voice" to move his hearers in certain scenes; otherwise it is a dull play with an inconsistent story, weak dialogue, and little point. Its present rendering shows the actor to be in command of a clever imitation of pathos, but it does not cause him to really touch the heart. His delineation of the Liar, in the piece made familiar of late years by Charles Mathews, is a great improvement upon the effort which precedes it, even though the assumption of youthful ease be not quite perfect; and whatever deficiencies may be found in the impersonation, it certainly possesses merits of distinction and simulated old-world manner for which we should in most other quarters look in vain amongst our actors. Miss Marie Litton's share in the comedy results in the most perfectly successful piece of art in the whole entertainment. Her portrait of a lady of fashion is instinct with the life that we may imagine to have been characteristic of a bygone age of powder and patch.

Mr. Burnand has supplied the German Reed Company at St. George's Hall with a new entertainment, which approaches nearer than usual to the confines of regular comedy or farce. *A Tremendous Mystery* is a lively vaudeville, with an ingeniously-contrived plot of wonderful intricacy, and it is so arranged as to admit of the usual doubling of parts by the performers. The customary music, too, is naturally introduced, and the result is the satisfactory fulfilment of somewhat restrictive conditions. Mr. Corney Grain, absent from ill-health, is not needed in the cast of the new piece, which includes Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Law, and Mrs. Reed with her son Alfred. His place in the monologue which has won for him such well-deserved reputation is taken by Mr. Arthur Sketchley, whose ever-popular Mrs. Brown has clearly lost none of her admirers.

IN THE PROVINCES.

After leaving Manchester, Mr. Irving went to Greenock, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The *Greenock Advertiser*, in anticipation of his arrival in that town, published a comprehensive and thoughtful review of his characteristics as an actor, and on seeing

his Louis XI. said that a more complete abandonment by an artist of his own individuality, or a more complete assumption by him of another's, it did not remember to have seen. Both the review and the critique, to judge from internal evidence, emanated from the competent hand of Mr. Davenport Adams. "Mr. Irving's Louis," he adds, "is more than the Louis of Delavigne. He gives us the mere words of the dramatist, but it is clear that he has gone elsewhere for the hints to make the portrait complete." In reference to Mr. Irving's Jingle, the same critic said it forcibly recalled to mind some of the best characteristics of Mr. Charles Mathews's acting. The Dundee press also showered compliments upon the actor. It was as Louis XI. that Mr. Irving opened his engagement at Edinburgh. He received a hearty welcome; "and never," says the *Scotsman*, "was such welcome more fairly earned than by our present visitor. Whatever diversity of opinion may still subsist in regard to certain features of his art, none will now be disposed to deny him the credit due to one who is, in every sense of the word, an ornament to a profession for which he never fails manfully to assert its rightful position. For the delineation of the crafty fanatic, whose exaggerated egotism the dramatist has taken care to leave without almost a single redeeming feature, Mr. Irving's resources are admirably adapted; while, on the other hand, the part allows to remain in abeyance certain peculiarities of action and utterance which we have felt to detract a little from the effect of some of his tragic efforts. The character, like every other he seeks to portray, has been most vividly conceived; and it was last night made to live before us on the stage with corresponding intensity of expression, alike in look, speech, and gesture. The demonstrations amid which the curtain fell left no doubt of the impression which the actor had succeeded in producing." "Whatever," says the *Courant*, may be the opinion of each individual as to Mr. Irving's talents and ability as an actor, there is no doubt that he stands at present at the very top of his profession. By dint of hard study, intelligent comprehension, a genuine love for his profession, and a determination to elevate it to its proper place as a means not only of recreation but of artistic enjoyment and æsthetic education, he has attained to a popularity which has at present no parallel in a tragic actor. In saying this we are by no means blind to Mr. Irving's faults as an actor. He has unfortunately not a few, but it speaks volumes for the genius of the man that, in spite of many drawbacks, which in the case of almost any other would have proved insuperable bars to success, he creates an impression on the mind of the spectator which testifies in the strongest manner to his histrionic power. His representation of Louis XI. is one which will add yet another laurel to the now ever-increasing series of his triumphs. No one can deny that it is a performance of real genius." The actor next appeared in *Hamlet*. Then the *Courant* says:—"It was a house peculiar to itself, one to be seen only once or twice a year, that witnessed Mr. Irving's first performance of Hamlet for the season. It was one of the most subdued assemblies that could be imagined. This tribute of silent admiration Mr. Irving must be well accustomed to in presenting Hamlet to any enlightened

audience. The character begins to be regarded not merely as acting but as a poetic interpretation. It would retain much of its effect in mere reading without the advantage of stage accessories. For an artist whose elocution is so fastidiously and often absurdly criticised, Mr. Irving accomplishes marvels with his voice. It has no rival for the scope and the variety of original meaning it can express. Whenever he desires to flash a particular idea on the mind of the spectator he can do it by an almost unobserved change of tone. In rapid contrast of expression he has a power which has been perfected by the severest culture. It is not limited to a scale of modulations or a series of studied accents which in time become familiar. There is no apparent end to their variation; each sounds new and spontaneous. Even if it be remembered it is still striking and appropriate. Hamlet will be thought by many to remain Mr. Irving's finest *rôle,* because it evokes the greatest breadth of dramatic genius in him. His poetic and realistic faculties have both full scope in it. The play scene is as vivid as the dream of *The Bells* or the death of Louis XI.; that with the ghost has qualities which could not be introduced into any of his melodramatic parts." To another large and intelligent audience, Mr. Irving played Richelieu for the first time in Edinburgh. "It was only natural," the *Scotsman* says, "that the character should be essayed by an actor who has revivified so many great dramatic creations. Mr. Irving was invariably most successful in the delineation of those passages in which the dramatist has been most true to reality. On the whole, the impersonation was a very true one, not to be ranked among the actor's greatest, however, simply because the part does not afford scope for the full display of his powers. As in almost everything he undertakes, Mr. Irving impressed his audience with a sense of the intellectuality of his performance, of the thoroughness with which he had studied it, and of the consummate art with which every detail was worked out in accordance with the conception he had formed. His assumption of the decrepitude of a man worn out before his time, for example, was wonderful in its realism, seemed to belong to the man so thoroughly that his sudden recovery of vigour in the last act was almost electrical in its effect. The Cardinal's ironical humour, and his familiar ways with his confidants, were delineated with a fidelity and force which were all the more admirable because the means employed were apparently so simple. In the great scene at the close of the fourth act Mr. Irving rose to the full grandeur and passion of the situation. The passages in which he was least effective were those in which Richelieu is didactic. Lord Lytton's blank verse in these passages is loud-sounding but inherently feeble, and Mr. Irving's attempts to give it force and application were not successful." In Glasgow, Mr. Irving's Louis XI., to say nothing of his other impersonations, was received with great favour. In consequence of want of space, our extracts from the criticism to which it was subjected must be rather brief. The *North British Daily Mail* dwells at some length on the originality of the performance. "Mr. Kean," says the critic, "was a student and a splendid artist, always conscientious, frequently intense.

There was an infinite variety of talent, but a certain monotony, in every character he played; and, except in plain unvarnished declamation, he was seldom in tragedy above mediocrity. In Louis he seized the salient points. The sudden transitions, both in tone and feeling, from cant to cruelty, inwardly chuckling at his own villany, were all bound up with a marvellous humour, which has served chiefly to preserve our memories of this excellent actor in the character. His ease, familiarity, and tone of nature were fully equal to the most highly-finished comedy. One thing was lacking —the tragic element. There was more in his Louis to be laughed at than shuddered at. Mr. Irving's Louis is totally distinct from Mr. Kean's. It is more aged, more suspicious, quieter in some parts, more intense in others. His transitions are as rapid, but his points more natural. To our minds, never have we seen so adroit a portrayal, and never within our memory has a greater triumph been witnessed than that of last night. Such a death-scene we have never read of any other actor having ventured upon." "The version of the play," says the *Herald*, "is the same as that used by Mr. Kean; and necessarily much that Mr. Irving does reminds us of his eminent predecessor. If some should regard that as a compliment to the majesty that lives only in memory, it is not to be understood as in any sense a depreciation of the majesty that now wears the crown. It is enough to say that Mr. Irving wears the 'golden round' with independence and power."

During the month Mr. and Mrs. Kendal fulfilled engagements at Liverpool and Birmingham. The *Liverpool Daily Post* speaks of Mrs. Kendal's Dora as "heightened by every resource of perfect acting into a lovely picture of purity and a tragic spectacle of graceful and true womanhood sacrificed by fate. The scene in which the husband and wife part is replete with beauty and power." The critic also praises Miss Kate Patterson's acting as the Countess Zicka, but points out a slight tendency she displayed to overdo the part. "In the great scene of the third act," says the *Birmingham Daily Post*, "Mrs. Kendal played with such intense feeling and superb expression that she took the house by storm, and reached a height of dramatic art which neither Rachel nor Ristori has ever surpassed. Mr. Kendal also, in the difficult situations of this, showed a power of pathos and feeling which could scarcely have been expected by those who have seen him in lighter personations; and the gifted pair must be congratulated on a triumph in the highest walk of their great art."

In the course of the month Miss Bateman fulfilled her engagement at Birmingham, beginning with *Leah*. The *Daily Mail* says that "her acting, like the colours of an old picture, seems mellowed by time. Those who are acquainted with the wonderful repose—statuesque repose it may be termed—with which her *Leah* has always been imbued will find the same characteristic as predominant as ever; but in the deep emotional passages, especially the great execration scene, where disappointment and hate give way to frenzied passion, they will see that the actress has considerably more command over herself than formerly, and that by the exercise of

Gaiety Theatre

PROPRIETOR ... MR. GUNN

LAST 6 NIGHTS OF

Mr. William Duck's

OUR BOYS

COMPANY

(Under the Stage direction of Mr. E. W, GARDEN)

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, November 4th, 5th and 6th, 1878.

the performance will commence (at 8 o'clock precisely) with

RUTH'S ROMANCE

A SUMMER EVENING'S SKETCH

By FRED W. BROUGHTON, Author of "Withered Leaves," "A Labour of Love." &c.

Ruth Carey	...	Miss EMILY WATERS
Jack Dudley	...	Mr E. S. WILLARD
Captain George Wilton	...	Mr F. HUGH HERBERT

Scene—Rookwood. Summer Time

To be followed by the New & Original Farcical Comedy (in 3 Acts) First Time on any Stage, entitled

UNCLE!

Written by HENRY J. BYRON, Author of "Our Boys," "Married in Haste," "A Fool and His Money," "Tottles," "Not Such a Fool as he Looks," "Cyril's Success," "Partners for Life," &c., &c.

Uncle Bootle	...	Mr J. F. YOUNG
Paul Beaumont	(his Nephew)	Mr EDMUND W. GARDEN
Peter Fletcher	(Beaumont's Bachelor Friend)	Mr E. S. WILLARD
Flyman	...	Mr BEDFORD
Puffin	(from Pappinger's, the Pastry Cooks)	Mr J. MCNAMARA
Mrs Beaumont	(Paul's Young Wife)	Miss EMILY WATERS
Emily Montrose	...	Miss LOUISE VERNON
Sarah	(the Beaumont's Maid of all Work)	Miss LAURA LINDON

Scene—The Beaumont's Cottage at Sydenham. Time—The Present

Act 1—A Young Bachelor.

Act 2—An Old Bachelor.

Act 3—Husband and Wives.

☞ SPECIAL NOTICE.

There will be no wait between Acts 1 and 2, and an exceedingly short one between Acts 2 and 3, the action of the Farcical Comedy being continuous, and the incidents being supposed to take place in the space of one Afternoon, and in a single Scene.

more natural means, with less appearance of straining after effect, she accomplishes the same ends, and improves rather than detracts from the intensity of the performance." Miss Bateman also appeared in Birmingham as *Queen Elizabeth*, in the English version of Giacommetti's play. In the words of the *Daily Post*, "she reveals a subtlety and even humour in the part for which her previous assumptions had scarcely prepared us. From her first entrance upon the scene she is completely mistress of the situation, and carries with her, not, indeed, the unswerving sympathies, but the imagination and convictions of her audience. There is no hesitation or vagueness about her performance. She stamps the shape and strikes the keynote of the character at once, and all the subsequent aberrations, outbreaks, and seeming inconsistencies of *Elizabeth*—her alternations of fierceness and fondness, of passion and self-control, of meanness and generosity, of candour and hypocrisy, of cruelty and tenderness—are but natural developments of the fitful, stormy, strangely-compounded nature revealed by lightning flashes in the opening scene."

Early in the month, Mr. Sothern's usually robust health temporarily gave way, and he was advised to abstain from work. Inactivity is almost unbearable to a man of his restless temperament, and accordingly, while making arrangements to spend the winter in the South, he resolved to fulfil at least a few of the engagements he had contracted. In the middle of the month he appeared at Liverpool, where he has played Dundreary and David Garrick with undiminished success. Mr. Toole visited Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other places in the North, relying chiefly upon *A Fool and his Money*. "If," says a Glasgow paper, "Mr. Toole is the follower of anybody, it is of Liston and Munden and Dowton, and the other great English comedians of two generations ago; but he only follows them in point of time, and not because his style of acting is in any way modelled on the traditions they have left behind them. Mr. Toole is a humorist, just as Fielding was a humorist, and as Hogarth was a humorist, the latter of whom he resembles in his short, thick-set person, in his strongly-marked and kindly face, and in his belief in all the virtues which distinguish our national character. Between the two men, moreover, there is the further identity, both of aim and of mental vision. Toole, like Hogarth, draws his inspiration from the life of the people he sees around him. Although he approaches the verge of caricature in his impersonations, he is in no sense a caricaturist." The manager of the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, brought out a "farcical comedy" in three acts, entitled *Uncle*, by Mr. Byron. It is exceedingly ingenious and amusing, and was cordially received. The uncle is an Indian millionaire, who makes a liberal allowance to a nephew, Paul Beaumont, on the condition that he does not get married. Paul, however, does not observe the condition, and, startled by an unexpected visit from his wealthy relative, is compelled to pass off Mrs. Beaumont as the wife of one of whom he has some reason to be jealous. Mr. Barry Sullivan, Mr. George Honey, and other popular players were making successful tours.

IN PARIS.

In the beginning of November the *Sphinx* was revived at the Comédie Française. First produced about five years ago, this piece, though not exhibiting the talents of the author, M. Octave Feuillet, at their best, met with extraordinary success, thanks in great measure to Mdlle. Croizette's terribly realistic acting in the death scene, the grace and force of Mdlle. Bernhardt's Berthe de Sevigny, and the vigorous impersonation of the husband by M. Delaunay. The actresses we have named are again playing in the piece, but the place of M. Delaunay is taken by M. Worms—a change which, highly as we think of the latter's capabilities, is scarcely one for the better. However that may be, the revival has proved no less successful than the first performances. Mdlle. Bernhardt's acting has lost none of its former strength, and Mdlle. Croizette has softened the horrors of the death scene without diminishing its force and truth to nature. The manager of the Gaîté has achieved an equally marked success by reviving M. d'Ennery's *Grâce de Dieu*, the origin of which is detailed in another page. The novelties brought out during the month have not been so fortunate. First in order of merit comes *Monsieur Chéribois*, a four-act comedy, by M. Louis Davyl, now being played at the Odéon. M. Cheribois *fils*, in his haste to amass wealth, loses 100,000 francs in Bourse speculations. The father declines to pay the money himself or to let his wife set apart a portion of her fortune for the purpose, and his family leave him in disgust. Soon afterwards it is announced that a banker to whom he had lent 100,000 francs has failed. Would it not have been better to spend the money on his son? Reflection and parental feeling lead him to answer the question in the affirmative, and just then he finds that, owing to the sagacity of a clerk, the money has not been handed to the banker at all. The old man is effectively represented by M. Richard, but the piece itself is rather disappointing. Next comes M. Legouvé's *Séparation*, which was played in the summer of 1877 before a select audience at Versailles, and has now been produced at the Vaudeville in due form. The plot shows that the author wrote with a purpose in his mind. A young wife, discovering that her husband is a professed spy, scornfully leaves his roof, and in order to have the custody of a child which has been born to them, he accuses her of adultery. The general effect of the play is extremely depressing, although many of the scenes are written with elegance and strength, and although M. Dupont-Vernon and Mdlle. Delaporte appear to advantage in the principal characters. *Le Gentilhomme Citoyen*, the latest novelty at the Troisième Théâtre Française, has completely failed to sustain in any degree the reputation which the author, M. de Calonne, achieved by his *L'Amour et l'Argent;* and the new piece at the Palais Royal, *Les Provinciales à Paris*, dealing with the adventures of a set of persons who come to the capital in the belief that four out of every six of the wives there are unfaithful to their spouses, a belief on which they are not slow to act, is scarcely so diverting as might have been expected. The Exhibition over and Paris comparatively cleared of foreigners, the managers are abandoning the revival policy, and many new pieces may shortly be produced.

IN BERLIN.

The principal novelties produced at the Royal Playhouse during the past month are pieces which had already been placed before the public in Vienna last season. *Die Büste,* a two-act comedy by Herr F. Zell, founded upon a story of M. Edmond About, met with a more favourable reception here than it did in the Austrian capital, and has been repeated several times. The plot is very slight. A sculptor, who goes to the house of a wealthy old widow to take her bust, is supposed to be a prince who has assumed the disguise of a sculptor in order to gain access to the old lady's niece, and the mistake gives rise to a number of very amusing scenes. The part of the old lady, which was not made much of in Vienna, is here played by Frau Frieb-Blumauer, in whose hands it becomes a most finished piece of comic acting. Fräulein Meyer, who had hitherto been known as a representative of sentimental heroines, made a great hit in the humorous part of Risotto, the sculptor's mischievous young pupil. When we add that Herr Kahle too has a good comic part, and that the little comedy was briskly played all round, we have said enough to account for its success. It was preceded by a new one-act piece by Herr R. Genée, entitled *Stephy Girard,* and founded upon an old novel of Sealfield's; the piece has the great demerit of being hardly intelligible to those who are not acquainted with the novel. On the 30th October, the same house gave another new programme, consisting of a one-act comedy by Herr Berthold Auerbach, the well-known novelist, entitled *Eine seltene Frau* (a singular woman), and a three-act comedy from the Polish of Count Fredro, by Herr G. von Moser, entitled *Mädchenschwüre.* The former is a very slight piece, somewhat in the style of a French *proverbe;* the character indicated in the title is a still more singular person than the famous woman who kept a secret, for she pretends to be older than she is. The Polish comedy has no local colouring, but is simply the story of two young girls who are induced by a soured old maid to take a vow against matrimony, and who break their vow within the next twenty-four hours. This is but a slight subject for three acts; the characters are, however, pretty firmly drawn, and the dialogue is bright and sparkling.

At the Residenz Theater, the German version of M. Emile Augier's *Lionnes Pauvres,* which we noticed last month, retained its place in the bills till the 29th October, when it was succeeded by a translation of the same author's latest work, *Les Fourchambault,* which met with such a favourable reception that a long run may be safely predicted. The translation, which is the work of Herr Gottlieb Ritter, is a slovenly production, but the acting is on the whole of considerable merit. Herr Keppler, in M. Got's part of Bernard, is more successful in the scenes with his mother than in other parts of the rôle, for he lacks the pungency which renders the French actor's impersonation so effective. Frau Claar Delia plays the part of Madame Bernard in a highly creditable manner, considering that it is so much out of her usual line. Frau Lewinsky-Precheisen is an excellent Marie Letellier, and Frau Ernst, as Madame Fourchambault, may safely challenge a comparison with the original representative of the part in Paris. On the other hand,

Herr Eggeling fails to satisfy those who have seen M. Coquelin as Leopold, and Herr Haack is not very happy in his impersonation of the Baron Rastiboulois, a character which has proved a snare for most foreign actors who have yet tried it.

At the Wallner Theater, *Ihre Familie* (Robertson's *Caste*) remained on the bills till the 25th October, and was replaced on the following evening by a new comedy in five acts by Herr Adolph L'Arronge, entitled *Doctor Klaus*, which was well received. The Doctor is a gruff, but noble-minded and kind-hearted man, whose niece, a rich jeweller's daughter, has married a poor nobleman of such extravagant notions that his wife's fortune is quickly dissipated. By various devices the Doctor succeeds in reforming his niece's husband and making him a useful member of society. It is, however, less to this not very novel central idea than to the wealth of its bright details and episodes that the success of the comedy is due. Amongst the subordinate characters are two young lovers, whose joys and sorrows give rise to some very pleasing scenes, charmingly represented by Fräulein Schwarz and Herr Blencke. A comic scene between the Doctor and a servant girl with a sore finger excited much mirth. Herr Lebrun was rather conventional in the title part. Perhaps the most original character in the piece is the Doctor's coachman, who invades his master's province and undertakes to cure a sick peasant, and who is represented by Herr Engels with much grotesque humour. The comedy was played well all round, and excited much laughter.

In *Parisina*, a new drama in five acts, produced at the National Theater on the 27th October, Frau Wilhelmine Guichard has fulfilled with considerable success the difficult task of adapting to the stage the story of Byron's poem of the same name, which so skilled a dramatist as Mosenthal attempted some years ago with signal ill-success. Fräulein von Rovella as Parisina, and Herr Timm as Ugolino materially contributed to the success of the drama, which was repeated several times. The same theatre has, since our last notice was written, given several interesting performances of *King Lear* and *The Merchant of Venice*, the Lear and Shylock being Herr Karlowa, an actor whose fine powers of characterization do not seem to have suffered from the long illness which has kept him from the stage for years. He excels in the delicate treatment of details more than in forcible expression, and his King Lear is accordingly more effective than his Shylock.

IN VIENNA.

The most prominent event we have to record this month is the production at the Burgtheater of a new German version of Shakspere's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Since 1854, when Herr Laube, who now manages the Stadt-Theater, produced at the Burg a version of this tragedy, which had already been performed at Dresden, no attempt has till now been made to add *Antony and Cleopatra* to the long list of Shakspere's plays which form a part of the regular repertory of the leading Vienna theatre. In 1854, the part of the

Egyptian queen was played by Frau Bayer-Bürk, a Dresden actress, who at that period used each spring to give a series of performances in Vienna, and was regarded as an unequalled representative of Goethe's Iphigenia and other similar parts. Her Cleopatra was a failure, and after four performances it was seen no more. The new version, produced on the 30th of October, is from the pen of Baron Dingelstedt, the present manager of the Burgtheater, who has taken amazing liberties with the original text and has so modified the characteristics of the leading personages that the Antony and Cleopatra of Shakspere are no longer recognizable. When the couple first meet after the battle of Actium, Cleopatra does not, as in Shakspere's play, withdraw from the rage of the Roman general, but unpacks her heart with words and falls a cursing like a very drab. The German adapter has also inserted a scene in which Octavia entreats her brother to spare Antony. He has moreover upset the balance of the tragedy by making the conclusion of the fourth act such a climax that the fifth becomes a tedious anti-climax. This mode of dealing with a work of the revered Shakspere has of course met with severe censure from the critical, while the result has failed to satisfy the general public. The tragedy was magnificently mounted, and, as a spectacular entertainment, cannot fail to draw good houses once a week for some time to come. Frau Wolter, as Cleopatra, was very effective in the more passionate scenes, and Herr Sonnenthal was a good Antony. Herr Robert too was very satisfactory as Octavian, and Herr Gabillon was an incomparable Lepidus. With such artistes at his disposal, it is much to be regretted that Baron Dingelstedt did not revive an existing version of the tragedy, instead of producing such an ill-advised adaptation. Another noticeable event of the past month was the jubilee of Herr and Frau Gabillon, who both completed the twenty-fifth year of their connection with the Burgtheater in the course of October. The event was celebrated on the 4th of November by a special performance of *Die Gönnerschaften*, during which the public gave an extraordinary ovation to Herr and Frau Gabillon, who received innumerable presents from their fellow-artistes and from various persons in high places. The 1st of November was celebrated at the Burgtheater and at all the other Vienna theatres by performances of Dr. Raupach's awful drama, *Der Müller und sein Kind*, in accordance with a time-honoured custom.

The Stadttheater has produced two novelties during the past month. First, a new comedy by Herr Julius Rosen, entitled *Ja, so sind wir*, which, like all its author's plays, is a rather disjointed production, but atones for the lack of serious interest by vivacious merriment. Several of the slightly sketched characters are amusing, but the plot is *nil*. An old gentleman who has nothing to do, and is in a constant flurry about it, was a highly entertaining character in the hands of Herr Buckovics. Herr Kadelburg gave a pleasing sketch of a young uncle who is annoyed at having a niece as old as himself. Fräulein Schratt and Frau Schönfeld were also well fitted with parts, and contributed materially to the success of the new comedy. The second novelty was a German version of *Les Four-*

chambault, of M. Emile Augier, entitled *Hans Fourchambault,* which was produced on the 7th November with brilliant success. The translation is on the whole good, but is open to objection in some material points. The famous "efface" is crudely rendered, "Beseitige das," and the words "Il le faut, je le veux, tu le dois," in which Madame Bernard tells her son to assist M. Fourchambault, are translated, "Es muss sein, ich will es, du sollst," which by no means justify Bernard's rapid inference, "Then he's my father." The piece was well acted. Unlike the performance at the Comédie Française, it is to the ladies that the palm of merit must here be accorded. Since Nathalie retired from the boards of the leading Paris theatre, no such old lady has been seen perhaps on any stage as the Madame Bernard of Frau Schönfeld—perfect in its delicacy and unobtrusive pathos. Fräulein Frank as Marie Letellier, and Fräulein Schratt as Blanche, were also highly satisfactory. On the other hand, Herr Bassermann as Bernard, and Herr Ranzenberg as Leopold, cannot sustain a comparison with Messrs. Got and Coquelin, nor can their acting be characterized as more than respectable. Herr and Frau Tyrolt did fairly well as M. and Mdme. Fourchambault, and Herr Grève played Rastiboulois effectively.

To the other theatres we can devote but a few lines. The Theater an der Wien has scored a great success with a new comedy of peasant life by Herr Anzengruber, entitled *Die Trutzige* (The Shrew). Frau Gallmeyer plays the principal part with that minute elaboration of details in which she is unrivalled. Herren Swoboda and Girardi also come to the front. The Ringtheater has produced a new piece by Herr Karl Costa entitled *Ihr Reservist,* which is really a sequel of the author's highly successful *Ihr Corporal.* Like most sequels, it ill sustains a comparison with its predecessor. It also suffers from being produced at a different theatre, and acted by different actors from those who made the characters their own in *Ihr Corporal.*

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

In Rome the operatic performances at the Argentina Theatre have recently cast the dramatic houses into the shade, Signora Galletti in particular having achieved great success in Donizetti's *Favorita.* At the Valle Theatre, the Monti company continued their season throughout the latter part of October, producing an Italian version of the *Barbier de Seville* of Beaumarchais, Giraud's *Il Figlio del Signor Padre,* an old comedy which hardly merits revival, a translation of *Le Postscriptum* of M. Emile Augier, and *La Posta in quarta Pagine* (M. Hennequin's *Petites Correspondances*), which met with little favour, being regarded as a pale imitation of *Les Dominos Roses;* they also repeated several times *Les Fourchambault* and *Le Mariage de Figaro,* which were the great successes of the season. Early in November the Monti company were succeeded by the Belloti-Bon company No. 1, who opened their season with Signor Paolo Ferrari's *Due Dame,* in which Signora Virginia Marini played her original part with that power of passionate expression which has placed her in the front rank of Italian actresses. *Il Trionfo*

d'Amore and *Dora* were given on subsequent evenings, and a new drama by Signor Cossa, entitled *I Borgia*, is announced for production during the course of the season. The only other theatre open at present is the Capranica, where Cimarosa's *Astuzie feminili* has been performed in a manner that leaves much to be desired.

In Milan, the Bellotti-Bon company No. 2 occupied the Manzoni Theatre till the end of October. Amongst the novelties produced by them we may name a version of the *Joseph Balsamo* of M. Alexandre Dumas, which met with as little success as that which attended the production of the orginal at the Paris Odéon. Signora Pia Marchi, however, excited much applause by her clever rendering of the part of Mdlle. Taverney, especially in the highly dramatic scene where she tells the story of her dishonour. They also produced without much success a translation of *Le Mari d'Ida* of Messrs. Delacour and Mancel, originally brought out at the Paris Vaudeville in September. Signor Marenco's *Speroni d'Oro*, with its interesting, if improbable plot, and its highly dramatic situations, was much more favourably received, being well acted, especially by Signor Pasta and Signora Pia Marchi. At the beginning of November this company was succeeded by that of Signor Morelli, whose leading actress, Signora Tessero, displayed her varied powers with great effect in M. Augier's *Madame Caverlet* and Signor Giacosa's *Fratello d'Armi*. At the Dal Verme Theatre the success of *I promessi Sposi* delayed till the end of October the long-promised production of the *Salvator Rosa* of Signor Gomes, which was so well received that it seems likely to remain on the bills for some time to come. The Teatro Milanese opened at the beginning of November with a programme which comprised, besides some familiar pieces in the Milanese dialect, a musical idyl by Signor Tofano, entitled *El Garibaldin*, which the company had produced with immense success in Naples. The Milanese public gave the new piece a cool reception on the whole, though certain attractive *morceaux* were applauded.

At the Gerbino Theatre in Turin there was produced, on the 17th October, a new mythical comedy by Signor Riccardo Castelvecchio, entitled *Omero a Samo* (Homer in Samos), which has attracted a good deal of attention. After a prologue in which the author apologizes for the liberties he has taken with the generally accepted story of the Greek poet's life, the curtain rises upon a scene representing the coast of Samos, where Homer, young and handsome, but already famous as the writer of the Iliad, arrives, after a stormy voyage, accompanied by Diagora, a rhapsodist, and Termessa, a maiden of savage beauty, who is passionately enamoured of the great poet. Homer in vain seeks to conceal his identity; he is soon recognized and enthusiastically received by the islanders, and especially by old Hesiod, who is betrothed to Aristea, the daughter of Cleofilo, one of the chief men of Samos. Aristea falls violently in love with Homer, who reciprocates her passion, and Hesiod at once renounces her in favour of his great rival. While Homer and Aristea are together in the garden, he is bitten by a poisonous asp as he is about to pluck a rose for her, and, after uttering a few unintelligible words, he falls down senseless. All would be lost but

for Termessa, who suddenly appears on the scene, and, after chiding Aristea for her idle tears, sucks the poison from the wound and departs, bidding her rival not tell the poet the name of his preserver. Homer soon recovers, and the marriage day is fixed. Termessa sends as a wedding present to her happy rival a steel mirror received by her mother from Vulcan, and which, she asserted, had the property of giving eternal youth to those reflected in it. Homer is the first to test it, and he immediately becomes stone blind. Everybody bewails the sad misfortune, but Homer is soon comforted by the voice of his beloved Aristea, who swears that she will devote her whole life to him. The curtain falls as Homer promises to write a new poem on the wanderings of Ulysses, of which Aristea shall be the chaste and faithful Penelope. The piece was well acted by the Pietriboni Company; Signora Silvia Fantechi, in particular, distinguished herself by her passionate impersonation of Termessa, the most powerfully-drawn character of the play. Signora Glech, as Aristea, seemed not quite at home in Greek costume. Signor Pietriboni himself played the difficult title part in excellent style. The performance was enthusiastically applauded, and the author was called before the curtain fifteen times.

IN MADRID.

The Teatro de Apolo, on the 17th October, produced a new drama by Don Leopoldo Cano, favourably known as the author of *El mas sagrado Deber*, and *Los Laureles de un Poeta*. The new piece bears the curious title of *La Opinion publica*, and has attracted a great deal of attention, and no little censure on account of the revolting nature of the plot, of which we shall, nevertheless, endeavour to give an outline. One of the central figures is a certain Don Juan, who, having returned from Cuba with a small fortune, opens a discount-house in Madrid and conducts it on fraudulent principles. He lives in apparent prosperity with his wife Matilde and their daughter Gloria, who when the play opens is a fair girl of sixteen. Another inmate of the house is Don Juan's clerk Luis, who has raised his eyes to his master's wife and with whom the innocent Gloria is secretly in love. There is a dark stain on Matilde's early life. Drugged and dishonoured by a ruffianly lover, she gave birth to a son, whom she quickly despatched to a foundling hospital, but the messenger, more tender than the mother, relented and brought the infant up as her own child. The bastard proved unworthy of such care, and when grown up deserted his foster-mother and was no more heard of by her. The child's foster-brother, before leaving the country on foreign service, gives Matilde a portrait of her child, whom she then discovers to her horror to be Luis, her husband's clerk, and the object of her daughter's love, which she supposes him to reciprocate, having misunderstood some words of love meant for herself. Matilde kisses the portrait just as her husband and daughter enter the room, and Don Juan, whose suspicions had already been excited by a scandalmonger, passionately charges his wife with infidelity, when Gloria intervenes and

quiets her father by declaring that Luis is her lover, and that Matilde's kiss was a mother's kiss. So ends the first act. Rumours of an impending crash have drawn an angry crowd round Don Juan's house, which is guarded by the police when the second act opens. The scene is in a dark room, where Luis makes a passionate declaration of love to Matilde, whom he does not know to be his mother. "I'm your——" mother, she is about to say, when he, thinking she says "I'm yours," tries to clasp her in his arms, but she escapes and he enfolds in his embrace Gloria who then enters the room and is mistaken in the dark for her mother. Thereupon Don Juan enters with a light, and seeing his daughter in his clerk's arms, is with difficulty restrained from doing violence to him. Luis seeks to appease the father by swearing that he will marry Gloria, when Matilde enters and firmly says "Never," thus reviving her husband's suspicions of her infidelity. Then a woman, who has figured in the play as an abandoned creature, enters and declares that Luis is her husband, and that a child she leads by the hand is his son. In the third act, Don Juan has challenged Luis, and the latter, having denounced his master to the police as a swindler, enters the house with the intention of carrying off Matilde. Don Juan is pursuing him, pistol in hand, when he is apprehended by the police; Luis, learning at last that the object of his passion is his mother, shoots himself, and Gloria falls down dead when the innocently incestuous nature of her love is disclosed, and the curtain falls as Matilde goes raving mad over the corpses of her two children. Such is an outline of the plot of this horrible drama, which is so powerfully written as to make one deeply regret that the author should waste his talent upon such a revolting theme. The only sympathetic character in the piece is Gloria, represented by Señorita Contreras with such grace and tenderness that the young actress has won golden opinions on all sides.

IN NEW YORK.

The season here fairly set in at the beginning of October. Madame Modjeska, the Countess Bozenta, reappeared at the Fifth Avenue Theatre as Camille, but met with a somewhat frigid reception. The hold she gained upon the fickle New York audience last year seems to be relaxing. In the middle of the month Mr. Mapleson opened his campaign at the Academy of Music, and soon afterwards produced *Carmen* with unequivocal success. The critics differed considerably in opinion as to the merits of the piece and the performance, but the public verdict was unmistakably favourable. Not the least interesting of the events we have to record is the début of Madame Elizabeth von Stamwitz at the Broadway Theatre. in *Messalina*. Her voice is decidedly against her, but this disadvantage is counterbalanced up to a certain point by a majestic presence and considerable capacity for the delineation of strong and impetuous passion. Of her success there could be no doubt.

Echoes from the Green-Room.

WE have reason to believe that Mr. Irving will receive the Queen's commands to give a performance at Windsor on the occasion of the Duke of Connaught's marriage.

Mr. Tennyson is writing a new play on the history of Thomas à Beckett.

Madame Nilsson, it is said, will be shortly installed as Grand Mistress of the Ancient Charitable Masonic Order of "The Eastern Star," composed chiefly of ladies of rank and distinction whose male relatives belong to the fraternity. It is said that she has grown fat. Three years ago Mdlle. Titiens observed: "Christine Nilsson has worn herself out prematurely by careless living. When I have sung I wrap myself up and go home. Christine, after the exertion of a night of opera, puts on her ball dress and goes to some fashionable party, stays up till five in the morning, and goes home exhausted. Her voice has suffered for it. Such a voice, with proper care, would have lasted fifteen years longer. Now it is already half-ruined, and will be gone in five years."

Madame Etelka Gerster will sing at the golden wedding festivities of the Emperor and Empress of Germany in Berlin next June.

It is to Mr. Irving's credit that he was the first to suggest a subscription for the relief of those who have suffered by the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank. He did so in addressing an enthusiastic crowd which assembled at the stage-door of the Greenock Theatre to give him a cheer. Nor did he fail to unite practice to theory. In conjunction with Mr. Toole, he has given two performances, one in Edinburgh and the other in Glasgow, in aid of the funds. The result was £730.

M. Sardou passes the winter at Nice, where he will write a five-act comedy for the Théâtre Français.

The *Republican Marriage* was written by Mrs. Holford, of Park-lane.

Mr. Sothern is at length convinced that it is necessary for him to take a long rest. In the middle of December, at the termination of his present tour, he starts for Italy, and will proceed thence to Athens.

Lord Newry has obtained judgment against the estate of the late Mr. Montague for £1,000 rent and interest of the Globe Theatre. He has also enjoined a Life Insurance Company from paying Mr. Montague's mother £1,000, the amount of a life policy which the deceased actor had taken out in her favour. The total amount received from all sources by his executors to date aggregate about £600; against these are claims amounting to £300.

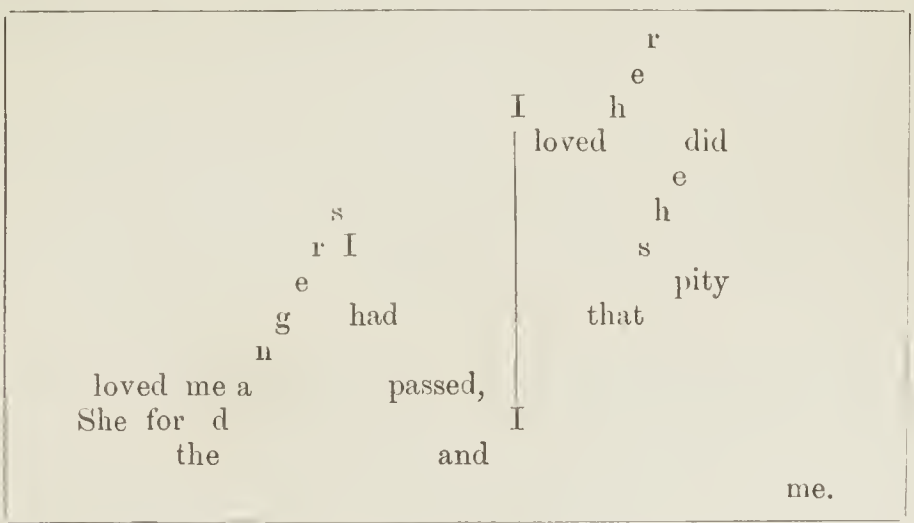
The new play by the author of *Les Danischeff* will be brought out at the Ambigu. It is at present called *L'Echéance*, and relates to the Polish insurrection of 1863. When it was read at the Comédie Française one

half of the committee voted for its immediate reception, and the other for a *reception à corrections.* This prevented the immediate production of the piece; and M. Newsky, anxious to have the judgment of the public upon a work for which he is exclusively responsible, carried the manuscript to M. Chabrillat. M. Got was disgusted. "During the last twenty years," he said to the committee, the "Française has refused Ponsard's *Honneur et l'Argent*, Dumas' *Demi-Monde*, and Emile Augier's *Gendre de M. Poirier.* I hope that to console you for the *reception à corrections*, *L'Echéance* will be as successful as those three pieces."

The German papers record another death upon the stage. Frau Nowitzky, of the Neustadt Hoftheater at Dresden, who was the choir leader of the chorus of nuns which appears in the third act of the *Trovatore*, had just completed her part, when she gave a slight scream, and suddenly fell down. She was carried into a dressing-room in her nun's costume, but died almost immediately.

To awaken greater interest for Mme. Gerster, the rumour had been set afloat in New York that the manager of the Imperial Opera-house in St. Petersburg has made her an offer of such magnitude that she could not resist accepting it. Of course Mr. Mapleson immediately confirmed the truth of these reports, and gave as the reason of the offer, "the failure of all the other stars this season." Will Mr. Mapleson even try to persuade us that Mdlle. Albani was a failure in the Russian capital?

Here is a diagram showing the range of Mr. Dillon's voice in the Senate scene of *Othello* :—



There was much commotion behind the scenes at the Strand Theatre one night last month. Mr. Penley, in consequence of some misunderstanding with the management, declined to go on the stage, although *Our Club* had commenced. It seemed very probable that the part would have to be read, but the call-boy, who knew the piece by heart, promptly expressed his readiness to take Mr. Penley's place, appeared before the audience with the self-possession of an experienced actor, spoke his lines with considerable point, and on three distinct occasions brought down the house! He is now playing the part every night.

There was a general meeting of the members of the Green Room Club on the 13th November, when some dark rumours as to the financial position of the association were shown to be without foundation. The number of members will henceforward be limited to 150.

Runaway horses constitute the latest advertising dodge in New York, in the theatrical profession. Ever since Miss Clara Morris's horse ran away with her some time ago, there seems to have been a rivalry among star actresses to meet with a similar good piece of bad fortune. Last month both Madame Modjeska and Miss Genevieve Ward were run away with by unruly horses.

Mr. Grundy is in earnest about the Examiner of Plays. "I have made up my mind," he writes to a friend, "to abolish him. It may take me twenty years, but if I live that long he won't."

Miss Amy Sheridan (Mrs. Preston) died somewhat suddenly at Brighton in the second week of November, and at an inquest held on her body the cause of her death was stated to be heart disease.

It may be remembered that about a year ago Mr. Farnie and Mr. Reece brought an action for libel against *The Theatre* because it quoted from the *Manchester Guardian* a paragraph relating to a piece which they had produced in that city. Mr. Farnie has now withdrawn, but Mr. Reece intends to go on. The case will soon be heard, and some interesting revelations may be expected.

Miss Neilson, who is now in Italy, will appear at the Adelphi in February next, supported by Miss Lydia Foote, Mr. Neville, Miss Pateman, Mr. Hermann Vezin, Mr. Flockton, and Mr. Ashley.

Diplomacy will be followed at the Prince of Wales's Theatre by *Caste*, with Mrs. Bancroft as Polly, Mr. Bancroft as Hawtree, Miss Roselle as Esther, and Mr. Arthur Cecil—not Mr. Hare—as Sam Gerridge.

Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt contributes a poem to the *Whitehall Annual.*

Miss Helen Hatton, daughter of Mr. Joseph Hatton, has just exhibited a picture at Chicago with conspicuous success.

Mrs. John Wood is engaged for the Haymarket.

The original drama underlined for production at the Princess's Theatre is now in rehearsal. Miss Fowler, Mr. Warner, and Mr. Redmund are in the cast.

Mr. John Clarke is about to return to the Criterion Theatre.

Mdlle. Beatrice—now Mrs. Frank Harvey—is, we regret to hear, seriously ill.

La Grace de Dieu will be followed at the Gaîté by *Les Brigands*, which has been formally transferred to that theatre from the Variétés.

M. Ballande, the manager of the Troisième Théâtre Français, is about to have some curious old plays, such as *Mirame* and *Vauceslas*, played at his *matinées*.

M. Gounod has expunged the Pater Noster from the baptism scene in *Polyeucte*. M. Sellier replaces M. Salomon as the tenor.

There was a pleasant supper at the Vaudeville on the 10th of November in celebration of the 200th representation of *Dora*. The whole of the company attended. At half-past one a.m. the signal was given that the *fête* should commence; the supper table disappeared as though by magic, and dancing was kept up until the sun rose.

It is proposed to make very important alterations in the Paris Conservatoire, in order to separate the two special characteristics of the famous school. Music and the drama are, it is proposed, each to be placed in the hands of a separate President. The matter will be fully discussed in the Chambers.

Madame Rosina Stoltz, the cantatrice, is about to sue to have her marriage with the Prince of Peace, a descendant of Godoy, annulled. She has taken to literature and spiritualism, and published a volume of thoughts dictated to her by Joan of Arc.

According to Herr Wagner's official organ, the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*, the first presentation of *Parsifal* is definitively fixed to take place at Bayreuth in 1880, that is, if the amount of subscriptions to be raised by the "Patronatverein of the composer will be sufficient to cover the outlay of the mounting of the work."

By a recent decree the Imperial Theatres at St. Petersburg will not in future be closed, as heretofore, during all the great fasts of the Church, but only during the first week in Lent and Passion Week.

Sig. Filippo Marchetti, the composer of *Ruy Blas*, has completed a new opera, *Don Giovanni d'Austria*, which will probably be produced this winter at the Teatro Apollo, Rome.

Mr. Fechter was the other day arrested at his country seat, in Richland township, Bucks county, taken to Doylestown and held in $300 to answer at Court for shooting "insectivorous birds."

Madame Janauschek was recently at Philadelphia. Her impersonation of the Empress Catherine evoked high praise.

Mr. Edwin Booth commenced on the 14th October a three weeks' engagement at the Broad-street Theatre, Philadelphia.

An American paper says: "Miss Louise Pomeroy has added to her Shakspearean repertoire a play written expressly for her." The public will await with no little curiosity the production of this new work.

Mr. Barry Sullivan has entered into an engagement to appear at San Francisco next year.

Mrs. Scott-Siddons was recently at San Francisco.

Literature.

MISS FANNY KEMBLE'S REMINISCENCES.*

FOR more than one reason this work is entitled to a hearty welcome. In the first place, it is a self-revelation of considerable interest. Half-unconsciously, perhaps, the authoress depicts the growth of the passionate and wayward though generous disposition which has so often thrown a shadow over her life, and for the first time we are permitted to see how the ideals and aspirations of her youth were destroyed as years passed on. Not only, moreover, are the events in her brief theatrical career succinctly narrated, but the men and women with whom she came into contact, political, literary, theatrical, and social, seem to live again in her pages. The book is based upon letters and diaries written at the time, and the portraits, accordingly, have a freshness and a brightness of colouring which in the contrary case might easily have been missed.

The third child of Charles Kemble, Frances, was born in Newman Street in 1809. Her mother, *née* Decamp, was an accomplished actress, and irreproachable in all the relations of private life. Curiously enough, not one of Charles Kemble's children manifested any inclination to go on the stage—indeed, seemed to shrink from the idea. Circumstances, however, compelled Frances Ann to adopt the profession for a time. Her father lost a small fortune over Covent Garden Theatre, and eventually had to announce that on a certain day the doors would be closed. In this emergency, as a last resource, it was decided that Frances should appear as Juliet, which she did. Let the events of that memorable night—the 5th October, 1829—be told in her own words:—

"My mother, who had left the stage for upwards of twenty years, determined to return to it on the night of my first appearance, that I might have the comfort and support of her being with me in my trial. We drove to the theatre very early, indeed while the late autumn sunlight yet lingered in the sky; it shone into the carriage upon me, and as I screened my eyes from it my mother said, 'Heaven smiles on you, my child.' My poor mother went to her dressing-room to get herself ready, and did not return to me for fear of increasing my agitation by her own. Dressed, I was led round to the side scene opposite to the one from which I saw my mother advance on the stage; and while the uproar of her reception filled me with terror, dear old Mrs. Davenport, my nurse, and dear Mr. Keely, her Peter, and half the *dramatis personæ* of the play (but not my father, who had retreated, quite unable to endure the scene)

* *Records of a Girlhood.* By F. A. Kemble. Bentley.

stood round me, as I lay, all but insensible, in my aunt's arms. 'Never mind 'em, Miss Kemble!' urged Keely, in that irresistibly comical, nervous, lachrymose voice of his, which I have never since heard without a thrill of anything but comical association; 'never mind 'em! don't think of 'em, any more than if they were so many rows of cabbages!' 'Nurse!' called my mother, and on waddled Mrs. Davenport, and, turning back, called in her turn, 'Juliet!' My aunt gave me an impulse forward, and I ran straight across the stage, stunned with the tremendous shout that greeted me, my eyes covered with mist, and the green baize flooring of the stage feeling as if it rose up against my feet; but I got hold of my mother, and stood like a terrified creature at bay, confronting the huge theatre full of gazing human beings. I do not think a word I uttered during this scene could have been audible; in the next, the ball-room, I began to forget myself; in the following one, the balcony scene, I had done so, and, for aught I knew, I was Juliet; the passion I was uttering sending hot waves of blushes all over my neck and shoulders, while the poetry sounded like music to me as I spoke it, with no consciousness of anything before me, utterly transported into the imaginary existence of the play. After this, I did not return into myself till all was over, and amid a tumultuous storm of applause, congratulation, tears, embraces, and a general joyous explosion of unutterable relief at the fortunate termination of my attempt, we went home."

The result was that in a few weeks Charles Kemble regained all that he had lost, and Frances became the most popular actress of the day. In her heart, like Macready, she disliked her new avocation; "an avocation," she says, "which I never liked or honoured, and about the very nature of which I have never been able to come to any decided opinion. It is in vain that the undoubted specific gifts of great actors and actresses suggest that all gifts are given for rightful exercise, and not suppression; in vain that Shakspere's plays urge their imperative claim to the most perfect illustration they can receive from histrionic interpretation: a *business* which is incessant excitement and factitious emotion seems to me unworthy of a man; a business which is public exhibition, unworthy of a woman."

SHAKSPERE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.*

MR. TEGG'S true function is that of a literary Autolycus, a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles, and he has manufactured some readable volumes by picking up odds and ends, and collecting them under such headings as "Posts and Telegrams," "Meetings and Greetings," &c. The well-gleaned field of Shaksperian history is not a happily-chosen one for the exercise of Mr. Tegg's craft, and so familiar and easily accessible are the sources from which he has drawn his information, that we fail to see any *raison d'être* for the little volume before us. After a brief sketch of Shakspere's life and a table of the supposed chronological order of his plays, the

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* *Shakspere and His Contemporaries.* By W. Tegg, F.R.H.S. Tegg & Co.

writer devotes some fifty pages to a necessarily very imperfect account of the plots of the plays and of the sources from which they were derived. This portion of the book seems to be for the most part condensed from Dr. Johnson's work, from which copious quotations are made, and when the compiler ventures upon a reflection of his own he does not always display much familiarity with the text of his author. When he writes of *Macbeth*, that "its sombre action is never relieved by a single character possessing humour or levity," we are forced to the conclusion that Mr. Tegg derives his knowledge of the tragedy from some mutilated stage version, omitting alike the Porter and Lady Macduff and her child. Nor does he seem to take any interest in events of the present day bearing upon Shakspere, for he not only omits any reference to Mr. Irving's restoration to the stage of the dramatist's own version of *Richard III.*, but actually states that Colley Cibber's adaptation still holds possession of the stage. An attempt is made to give an account of forty-three of Shakspere's dramatic contemporaries in a short chapter which really contains no valuable information; it would have been wiser to deal at some length with a few of the more eminent dramatists of the period and to omit the greater number whose names have passed into merited oblivion. A similar remark applies to the chapter on the actors of the Elizabethan era. If we find nothing praiseworthy in the plan of this little volume, we find equally little that merits commendation in its literary style, which is unpardonably slipshod, while it has been so carelessly prepared for the press that a long—and yet incomplete—table of *errata* has been found necessary.

Correspondence.

MR. IRVING AND AMERICA.

To the Editor of *The Theatre*.

SIR,—In your last issue you adverted to a letter which is supposed to have been written by me, and in which these sentences occur:—"I am not foolish enough to consider my success certain among the American people, of whose tastes I know nothing. In England I know what I am about."

This extract is a pure fabrication, and I shall be glad if you will let me say so.

Far from *not* wishing to visit America, I earnestly look forward to going there, for I love the country, and have troops of friends in it.

Yours very truly,

Glasgow, *Nov.* 18. Henry Irving.

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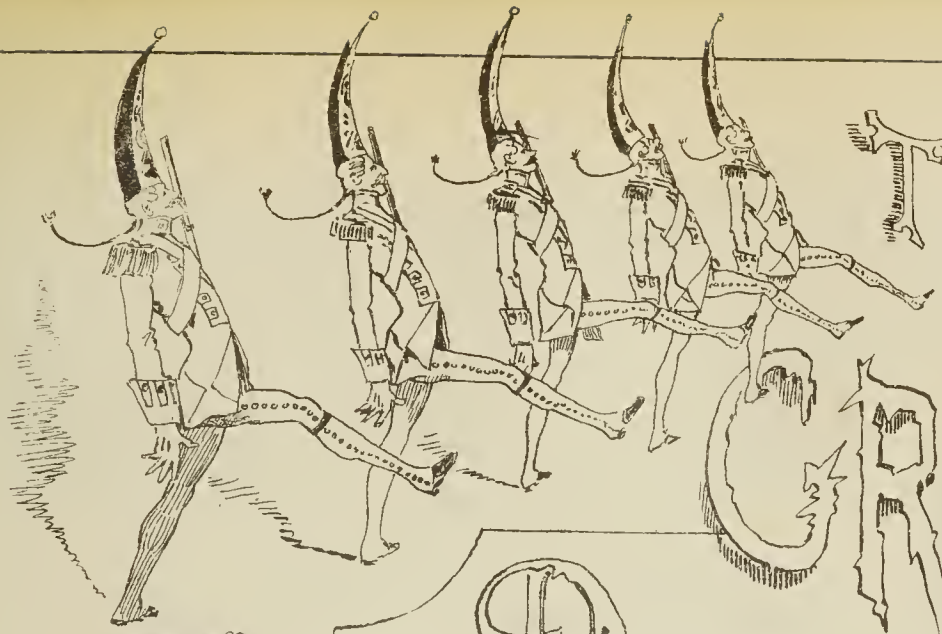

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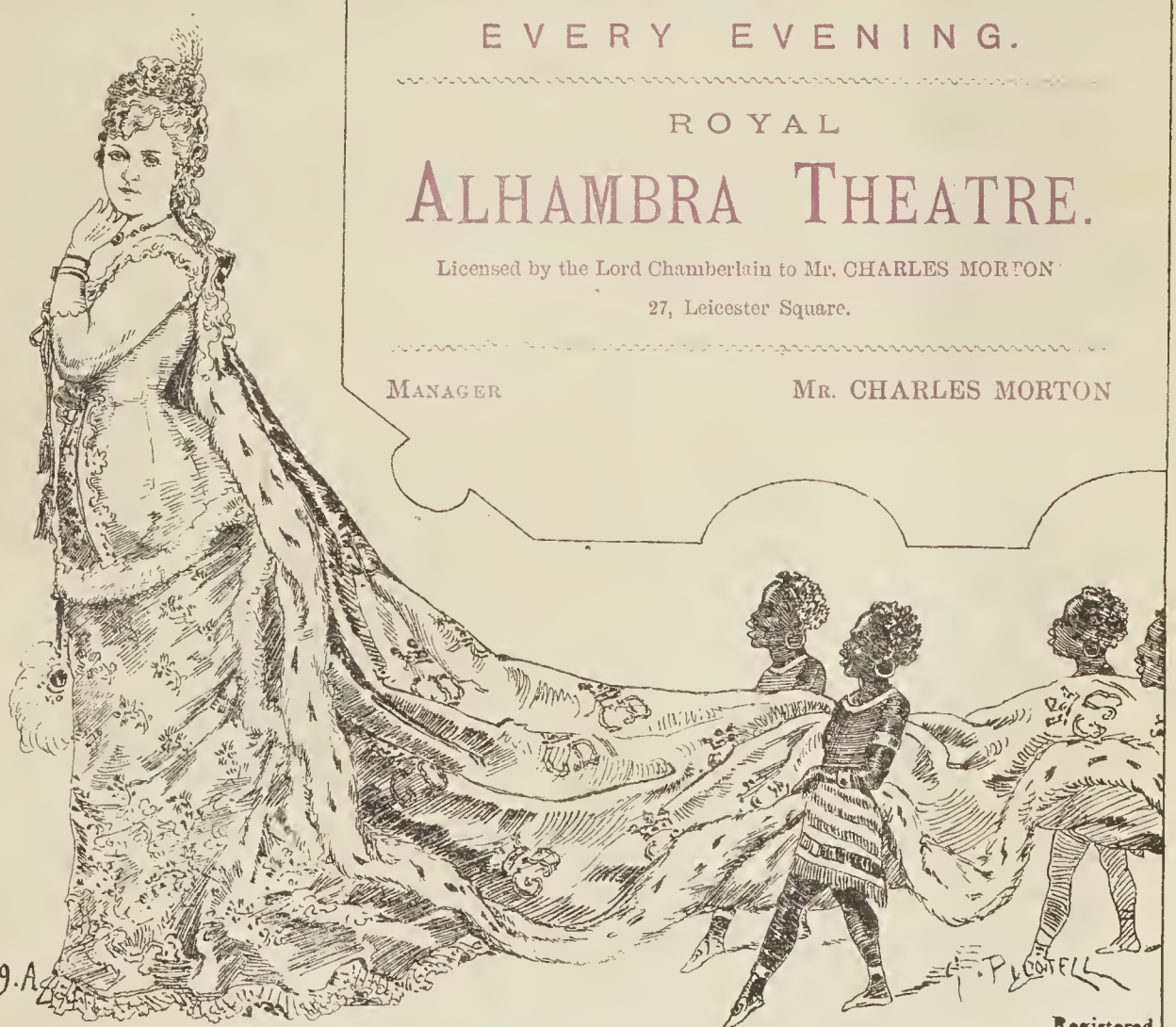

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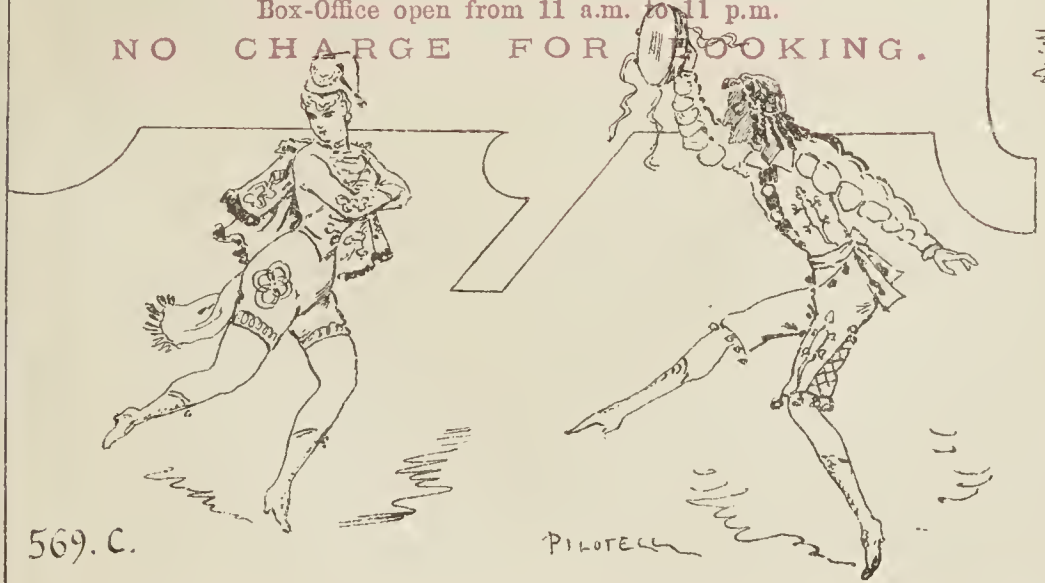

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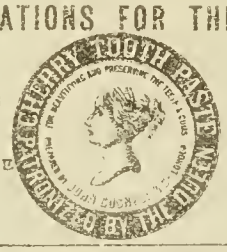

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The Theatre.

JANUARY 1, 1879.

The Watch-Tower.

THE PAST YEAR AT THE THEATRES.

LTHOUGH many past years have individually been productive of more striking theatrical events than any to be found in the chronicles of 1878, there is every probability that the dramatic work accomplished without as well as within the theatre since last Christmas will in time to come be pronounced to have special if not altogether exceptional importance. It is true that the Pessimists may fairly accuse our stage of having brought to light no "new and original" play of the highest order. These prophets of evil who profess little confidence in any happy future which can be predicted for our acted drama, will doubtless point out that a large proportion of such new pieces as have not been taken from the French have been failures. They will ask to have indicated to them any new author of genuine promise whose efforts have been unearthed by managers; they will remind us that for the most part our most successful authors and adapters of plays have signally failed to increase or even to make good their reputation. We shall hear that the list of theatres devoted to the higher interests of the drama has grown shorter rather than longer; that few new players have made a favourable mark, and that many of the older ones have disappointed general expectation. The tendency of managers nowadays towards relying upon revivals of past successes instead of trusting to fresh experiments will, we may rest assured, be made the most of; and the system, now so popular, of engaging the members of a company only "for the run of the piece"

will receive well-deserved condemnation. We shall, in fact, be told that on the stage as well as elsewhere we are, as a nation, going from bad to worse; such artistic excellence as we have exhibited will be pooh-poohed, or else set down as mere slavish imitation, whilst our artistic faults both new and old will be insisted upon so loudly and so earnestly that we shall begin to wonder why our abandoned playhouse is not put down by Act of Parliament. At the best the dramatic year 1878 will in these quarters be treated as a well-meant failure, and the oration over its funeral will be marked by the faintest of faint praise if not by actual condemnation, by a pitying shrug of the shoulder, if not by a deliberate and open sneer.

To these somewhat depressing views, or at any rate to a modification of them, the bare chronicle of the productions of the London theatres during 1878 will, it must be confessed, lend apparent confirmation. Those who do not look very deep into the meaning of the items of the catalogue placed before them may on the surface find ready support for their preconceived theories concerning the degeneration of the contemporary English stage. The success of adaptations like *Diplomacy* and *Proof* may be contrasted with the failure of dramatic authors like Messrs. Gilbert, Byron, Wills, Tom Taylor, Albery, and F. Marshall to achieve practical success with *The Ne'er Do Weel, Conscience Money, Vanderdecken, Such is the Law, No.* 20, and *Family Honour*. It may not unfairly be contended that sympathetic and beautiful as is Mr. Wills's treatment of *The Vicar of Wakefield, Olivia* did not in reality possess very great dramatic strength, and owed most of its popularity to the exceptional grace and feeling with which it was played. On the other hand it may without much hesitation be affirmed that Ross Neil's fairy play *Elfinella* lost all its chance at the Princess's Theatre through the mistaken method employed in its stage illustration; its delicate spirit was allowed to evaporate. Other disappointments of a kind to which we have become accustomed were the inadequacy of Mr. Byron's new comedy *Conscience Money* to produce either sustained interest or amusement, and the proof afforded by the unfortunate motive of *The Ne'er Do Weel* that Mr. Gilbert is lacking in sympathy with his audience. Neither Messrs. Taylor and Meritt's gloomy and illogical *Such is the Law* nor Mr. Frank Marshall's *Family Honour* can be said to have achieved its ambitious purpose; nor did *Vanderdecken*, in spite of the favourable conditions of its production, secure more than a *succès d'estime*. To go on multiplying possible grounds of disappointment would unfortunately be—now as heretofore on similar occasions—only too easy. The performances of standard plays, chiefly at the Hay-

market early in the year and at Drury Lane in the autumn, have certainly not risen above the average, either in the individual impersonations of the respective stars or in the general efficiency of the cast. Signal failures, like that of Mr. Sothern in *The Crushed Tragedian* and of Herr Moritz—to select widely different examples—have been by no means rare, and there is every reason to suppose that from a managerial point of view 1878 has upon the whole been by no means satisfactory.

Admitting many of these strictures to be just, and especially regretting the fact that the original dramatic authorship of the year has been undeniably weak, we are nevertheless bold enough to hold that our retrospect of the past year affords legitimate grounds for hopeful anticipations of the future. If the actual achievement has been limited in scope, it has at least afforded ample promise; if the effort has not been singularly successful, the object has at all events been worthy. First and foremost we would note as an encouraging feature of our chronicle the return of poetry to the stage. Whatever might from various circumstances have chanced to be the reception awarded to a dainty poem like *Elfinella*, to a weird legend like *Vanderdecken*, or to a classically simple sketch like *Olivia*, the literary polish, the perfect purity and the delicate fancy which in different degrees characterize these works would have amply justified the experiment involved in placing them upon the boards. In each of these plays there was much which could appeal only to the more refined taste and sense of its audience. The sacrifices offered up at the shrine of popularity were few and insignificant. The pieces were of a kind which, a few years ago, managers would not have dared to bring out and playgoers would have ridiculed unmercifully. Passing from the original plays to the adaptations, we find it worthy of note that the most successful of them, that of *Dora*, by Messrs. Bolton and Savile Rowe, is to all intents and purposes an English play built upon French foundations. This is what M. Sardou objects to so much; his play has been, according to his taste, spoiled—according to that of English playgoers, has been wonderfully improved. The ingenuity displayed in adaptation of this—the highest—order is no doubt a quality far inferior to those demanded for original work; and it may well be that the writers who can so happily execute a difficult task of translation are incapable of creating the characters and situations which they know to be demanded by the taste of London audiences. But when we observe what happens when this ingenuity is absent, we obtain a gauge by which to measure its value. Such plays as *Jealousy*, *Weeds*, and *The Barricade*, all showed how easy it is for the adapting dramatist to take his subject

out of its original French without making it English save in name. In Mr. Albery's version again of *Les Fourchambaults,* we have a play which, though written in strong nervous dialogue far superior to any which occurs in *Diplomacy,* misses the mark because the English playwright has not been able to stand sufficiently far away from the picture which he is copying to judge of its effect in its new light. After overcoming many of the difficulties incident to the treatment of M. Augier's work, he breaks down over a passage which sets the teeth of his hearers positively on edge; he removes one obstacle, only to make for himself a new one. In *Proof,* the other chief adaptation of the year, Mr. F. C. Burnand has attempted little beyond compression of his story within the limits prescribed by the habits of London lovers of melodrama; the play, a sound and useful one of a not very ambitious order, remains deliberately French from first to last.

When we come to deal with plays confessedly less ambitious in their aim we find that, in accordance with the spirit of the age, light-hearted fun has laughed serious effort out of court. Burlesques like *Over-Proof, The Lady of Lyons Married and Settled, H.M.S. Pinafore,* and *Little Fra Diavolo,* together with comic plays like *Retiring, Jeames, The Hornet's Nest,* and *Our Club*—the last-named a really clever and perfectly original specimen of farcical comedy—have hit the taste of the public where melo-dramatic works and dramas of "domestic interest" like *No.* 20, *or the Bastille of Calvados, Twine the Plaiden, Mayfair and Ragfair, Vivianne,* and *Love or Life,* either failed or obtained at least a qualified success. It becomes indeed more and more evident that the drama of action and of deep feeling must nowadays attain a very high standard if it is to hold its own. The taste for parody, fed as it is by extremely able parodists, has done its work whether for good or for evil; and average London audiences are either amused, or bored, or disgusted with earnest and thoroughly respectable dramatic work of the second grade, such as would have been quite able to interest and entertain their forefathers. The moral of this it is no part of our purpose here to draw, but the fact is evidently worthy of note by both dramatists and managers. Before passing from this phase of our retrospect we may fairly congratulate ourselves upon the superiority so far as purity of motive is concerned of our home-made fun over the fun which we import from abroad.

The art of our actors has of late advanced more rapidly perhaps than that of our playwrights. A stage which can during the twelve-month boast of such impersonations as Mr. Irving's *Louis XI.,* subtle, strong, and picturesque, and Miss Ellen Terry's *Olivia,* an acted poem, has surely grounds for pride. The mark made by these

two players, whose future association at the Lyceum we regard as the happiest of auguries, is not likely to be passed over, and we must not forget the advance made by several younger artists whose capabilities have now for the first time been fully realised. Thus Mr. Terriss made a completely new departure in his Thornhill at the Court Theatre; Miss Moodie's power of pathos has made itself felt at the Haymarket; Miss Marion Terry has more than realized all that has been predicted of her. It would be a welcome task to add, as we readily could, to the list; but enough has been said that, if we lack a natural school of acting, we possess at any rate the material out of which promising pupils are made. Only the strongest spirit of self-depreciation could lead us to uphold the theory that the histrionic art is dead or dying upon our stage.

At least as important a consideration as any of those which lead us to take a hopeful view of the future from a retrospect of the past, is the marked attention which has during 1878 come over the relationship between Stage and Church. What this alteration, what it implies, and what it bids fair to accomplish, we have already discussed periodically in these columns. Intimately connected with this recognition of the drama as an intellectual and moral recreation of the very highest order, is the advocacy, now growing in tone and in frequency, of an English National Theatre. The death of narrow-minded religious and social prejudice against actors and their calling implies the birth of an agitation for their due support by the nation which owes them so much. It is probable that the original impetus to much of this healthy feeling had its origin in Mr. Irving's speech at Birmingham; it is certain that the attitude assumed by this actor towards those who have hitherto looked with suspicion upon the theatre has done much both to encourage his brother-actors and to conciliate all those guardians of the public morals who are not absolutely blinded by prejudice. Be the cause, however, of this new movement what it may, it is enough that its existence should be noted in order to give abundant proof that those who pray earnestly for the regeneration of our drama have ample reason to feel satisfied with the stage-history of 1878.

THE IMMORALITY OF FRENCH COMEDY.

IT is a noteworthy circumstance that the immorality which characterises the majority of the comedies brought out in Paris is an evil of comparatively recent growth. Those who imagine that the grossness of the English drama in the days of Charles II. was

due to French influence are certainly in error. The plays of Molière and his contemporaries are remarkably free from offence, although written in a by no means puritanical age. Their interest depends almost exclusively upon an interesting and wholesome story, terse and sparkling dialogue, and an accurate or humorously exaggerated delineation of character. They do not appeal to prurient and other ignoble tastes, and but seldom make dramatic capital of a woman's frailty. If, as in Shakspere, they contain anything of an offensive nature, it is accidental rather than intentional, a matter of detail rather than a part of the general plan. Indeed, scarcely one of the plays contributed to the French stage about two hundred years ago can be deemed improper reading even for young persons. This regard for decency was necessarily increased by the odour of sanctity which came over the court of Versailles in the closing years of the Grand Monarque's life, and even during the Regency and the reign of Louis XV., when French society in general sank to a greater depth of profligacy than had ever previously been reached, comedy remained comparatively pure. Regnard, Destouches, Marivaux, Lachaussée, Diderot, Voltaire,—the works of these and other dramatists who flourished between the death of Molière and the accession of Louis XVI., might with a few trifling alterations be represented in London at the present day without shocking the most sensitive. Much the same may be said of the French drama for some years after the Revolution. But as time went on a change for the worse became apparent. The German school of dramatic composition found many disciples in Paris; the comedies brought out there gradually assumed an unhealthy tone, and French dramatists now seem to accept it as a fundamental axiom of dramatic composition that if a play is to succeed it must be based upon seduction or adultery. In the words of Mr. Mathews, we have no right to feel surprised if the heroine of a comedy comes before us as the affianced bride of one man, the wife of another, in love with a third, and with a child by a fourth. Then we see milliners' girls and lawyers' clerks living together in a most unceremonious manner, ballet-girls talking openly and unblushingly of their numerous lovers, children ignorant of their paternity, &c. To make matters worse, these little irregularities are palliated rather than held up to reprobation, and the sympathies of the audience are enlisted on the side of vice as against virtue itself. Everybody commiserates Frou-Frou; her husband and his wrongs are forgotten.

The immorality of French comedy has now increased to such an extent as to imperatively call for the interference of the Government, and early in November, it will be remembered, a letter on

the subject was addressed to the theatrical managers of Paris by the Minister of Public Instruction. "For some time," he says, the public mind has been disquieted by the sensible abasement observable in certain manifestations of the dramatic and lyrical arts, and many persons whose opinions are worthy of respect attribute this decadence to the industrial freedom extended to the theatres by the decree of the 6th January, 1854. The evil being undeniable, it becomes my duty to seek a remedy. Three considerable interests are involved in the question and have equally occupied my thoughts—the interests of art, of the public, and of the *artistes*. To assure to the last the just reward of their labours, to provide the public with inoffensive entertainments, and to restore to the dramatic and lyrical, if it is possible, the tone which formerly gave our theatres so legitimate a reputation—these are the ends to which my efforts must be directed. By way of making my task easier, I wish to receive all the information on the subject that can be given, and with this view put myself in communication with those whose experience in such matters is beyond question. I shall be much obliged, therefore, if you will acquaint me with your personal views as to the *régime* established in 1854." The managers, in their replies, generally ascribe the decadence in question, not to free theatrical competition, but to the inordinate liberty accorded to the cafés-concerts and the heavy charges laid upon the theatres.

Dismissing the notion that the Government intend to abolish free trade in theatrical matters and restore the old *régime*—a notion which, despite its improbability, seems to be entertained in many quarters—we proceed to ascertain the precise meaning of the Minister's somewhat vaguely-worded letter. He does not maintain that from an intellectual point of view there has been a falling off in the quality of French plays, for the simple reason that by doing so he would place himself in an untenable position. For anything equal in dramatic strength and beauty to the chief plays of the last twenty or thirty years we must go back to the days of Voltaire, perhaps to the Augustan age itself. M. Bardoux pointedly says that the public must be provided with plays of an inoffensive description, and herein, we think, the real object of the step he has taken will be found. Nor has this step been taken a moment too soon. Every dramatic author in France, from M. Dumas and M. Sardou down to M. Ernest de Calonne, scarcely ever writes a piece without dirting their hands in the process. The least ready to pander to the ignoble tastes of the audience is M. Augier, but it can hardly be averred that *Les Lionnes Pauvres* and *Les Fourchambaults* are composed of wholesome and edifying materials.

The plot of the first is founded upon adultery, and that of the second on seduction. If such is the case with plays brought out at the Comédie Française and the Odéon, it may well be supposed that the account we have to give of the secondary theatres is still more unfavourable. Not to multiply examples, a piece like *Niniche* enjoys a long run at the Variétés, and the dramatists who write for the Palais Royal seem anxious to surpass Etherege and Wycherley in flagrant indecency of incident and dialogue. In these offences against taste and morality, too, the opera is not so far behind the drama proper as may be thought. The theatrical representations of Paris are a scandal to the nation, and if M. Bardoux succeeds in clearing the Augean stable, he will have rendered his country an essential service. The evil would never have attained its present proportions if the Censor had been as quick to perceive immoral lines as political allusions.

PEACE WITH HONOUR.

BETWEEN four and five years ago two remarkable men of letters met by chance at the door of the London Library. They were almost life-long friends, but had not seen each other for some time. In appearance they presented a striking contrast : one, whose iron-grey hair nearly reached his shoulders, was bent and feeble; the other, with his naturally florid face set off by thick white whiskers and moustaches, and with much of the animation of youth in the expression of his eyes as he glanced at you over his spectacles, seemed to have a long lease of life. "Lewes," exclaimed the second, "can it be you ? My junior by five or six years, you ought to be at least as well as I am." "Cela dépend, my dear Oxenford," was the reply. Not long afterwards the apparently robust man was seized with what proved to be a fatal disease, and his prematurely aged friend has now joined him in the grave. Those who are acquainted with the story of George Henry Lewes's early struggles may perceive in that "cela dépend" a certain mournful significance, a faint echo of the past. Less fortunate than Oxenford, he received from his parents nothing more than a fairly liberal education, and at the age of eighteen or nineteen found himself dependent upon his own exertions for a livelihood. For many years he was familiar with poverty, whether as the mercantile clerk in the City, as the self-supporting student at the German university, or as the unrecognised journalist and essayist. In order to procure the books he wanted, to dress in a becoming manner, and to join

the weekly gatherings at the Fielding Club,—gatherings at which Thackeray, Oxenford, Jerrold, and the present musical critic of *The Times* were the principal figures,—he had to deny himself many of the necessaries of existence. Fame at length marked him for her own, but in the mean time his constitution had been incurably impaired by want and intense application, and had it not been for the devotion of his gifted wife, the authoress of *Romola* and *Daniel Deronda*, he might not have lived so long as he did. His works range over a large field—biography, criticism, philosophy, dramatic poetry, fiction, and even natural history. His reputation rests chiefly on his *Life of Goethe* and the *History of Philosophy*, works of the highest interest and value. His treatise on the Spanish Drama reveals an acute perception of the strength and weakness of Lope de Vega and Calderon as writers for the stage, but the two tragedies which he gave to the world—the *Noble Heart* and *Robespierre*—are singularly ineffective from a theatrical point of view, and are now but seldom spoken of. To the Lyceum, during the management of Mr. Charles Mathews, he contributed, under the name of Slingsby Lawrence, *The Game of Speculation, The Lawyers, Sunshine through the Clouds, Taking by Storm*, and a drama in eight acts called *The Chain of Events*. In the playbills of the time it was stated that the plot of the first of these pieces had been taken from *Merçadet*, but as a matter of fact *A Game of Speculation* was almost a close translation of the French piece. Deeply read in dramatic literature, and having derived as an amateur actor some practical knowledge of the principles of stage effect, he contributed many theatrical criticisms to the *Leader*, and his well-known essays on histrionic art would take rank as a standard work on the subject if he had not had an excessive admiration of the old school of acting and the players who follow its more than doubtful precepts. In regard to his works in the region of thought, he did not frame a philosophy of his own, but has expounded the philosophy of others with almost unrivalled force and clearness.

Mr. Alfred Wigan has also gone over to the majority. The announcement did not take us by surprise, as for some months the state of his health had been such as to exclude all hope of recovery. His career furnishes a signal proof of the importance of tenacity of purpose in theatrical life. Born at Blackheath in 1814, he received a good education, and at the age of twenty-three, after playing for a few nights at the old Queen's Theatre, then in the hands of Mrs. Nisbett, appeared at the St. James's under the name of Sydney. The parts allotted to him in drama pure and simple were not such as to bring his abilities to a test; but in operatic

pieces, thanks to natural aptitude as a singer, he proved of some value. Madame Vestris quickly engaged him for Covent Garden, where he appeared under his own name. His deportment and delivery exposed him to no little ridicule, but by dint of sheer hard work he contrived in course of time to overcome these defects, and in 1842, when *Gertrude's Cherries* was brought out, his acting as the Belgian guide in the field of Waterloo showed that good things might be expected of him. Soon afterwards he took service under the Keeleys at the Lyceum, having in the mean time married Miss Leonora Pincott. During his engagement here he appeared in some little pieces adapted by himself from the French. In 1849, at the Princess's, he sprang to a prominent place in the profession by his acting in *The First Night,* the piece with which his name is most closely associated. Mr. Charles Kean engaged him for the same theatre in the following year, but the effect with which he played Château Renaud in the *Corsican Brothers* soon made the place too hot to hold him. He then took the Olympic Theatre, and during his management of that theatre increased his already high reputation by his acting in *Plot and Passion,* and *Still Waters run Deep.* Though injured at the Princess's by professional jealousy, he did not, it is to be feared, rise superior to it himself, for the most gifted member of his company was kept so far in the background that on one occasion even the genial critic of *The Times* was moved to announce as a surprising fact that Mr. Robson had been allowed to speak. In 1857 Mr. Wigan gave up the Olympic on account of ill-health. He reappeared on the stage in 1860, and after representing the chief part in *House and Home* at the Adelphi, took the St. James's Theatre. It was here that he came forward in the *Isle de Saint Tropez* and the *Poor Nobleman.* He next opened the new Queen's Theatre, subsequently appearing at the Gaiety as Lord Foppington and other characters. In 1872 he and his wife formally withdrew from the stage, but in 1877 they gave a morning performance at the Gaiety to a select audience—so select, indeed, that admission was to be obtained only by vouchers from certain persons of rank. No greater affront than this has ever been put on the playgoing public. However, let us proceed to speak of Mr. Wigan's attainments and achievements as an actor. His range was narrow, but all that he did was characterised by force, artistic finish, and sound judgment. In parts requiring English to be spoken with a French accent he was particularly happy, and his John Mildmay was admirable by reason of his exquisite ease, incisive utterance, and sustained strength. In private life he was known as a man of large reading and refined manners.

Two other respected names appear in the theatrical obituary of the last six weeks. The first is that of Albert Emil Brachvogel, the author of *Narcissus*. This eminent dramatist was born at Breslau forty-five years ago, and after gaining high honours at the Magdalen Gymnasium, was placed by his parents in the *atelier* of a painter. His sympathies, however, were with another form of art, and proceeding to Vienna he appeared on the stage there in some small but not entirely thankless parts. The result being disappointing, he returned to Breslau, passed some time at the university, and became a man of letters. His parents had left him a little fortune, but in 1853 he reduced himself to penury by some disastrous speculations. In this strait he became secretary at Kroll's theatre, devoting his leisure to the composition of *Narcissus*. Brought out in 1857, this exquisitely pathetic play met with great success, and has since been seen in almost every theatre in Europe. Brachvogel's other contributions to the stage were not so well received, probably because his best energies were devoted to the historical romances and novels which added so largely to his fame. He also wrote some biographies and essays on theatrical subjects. On the day of Brachvogel's death, the 27th November, Mr. Frederick Gye, while out shooting on Lord Dillon's estate, Dytchley Park, with Sir Alfred Horsford, Major Hamilton, and Mr. Spencer Ponsonby-Fane, was wounded in the right side through the accidental discharge of a gun, and in less than a week he was dead. This event removes a conspicuous figure from the musical world. Mr. Gye's management of the Royal Italian Opera was both honourable to himself and advantageous to all lovers of music. Not to speak of other great services he rendered to art, he may be said to have introduced Meyerbeer to the London public, and it was under his banner that Patti and Lucca and Albani first came before us.

Portraits.

XI.—MISS FOWLER.

IN the Autumn of 1863 three sisters were residing with their mother in the neighbourhood of the Strand. Their father, lately deceased, had never allowed them to enter a theatre, but the eldest was now occasionally allowed to pass an evening in one with a gentleman to whom she had plighted her troth. The other girls, eager to know what such wicked places were like, frequently expressed a desire to accompany her, but were as often snubbed for their pains. Before long, however, the desire came to be gratified in a curious way. Early one evening the lover unexpectedly arrived with a box order for the Adelphi in his pocket. His affianced bride was not at home, and he promised the sisters that if they found her he would take them all with him. The elder of the two, a shrewd, mischief-loving, light-hearted girl of twelve summers, by name Emily, proved quite equal to the occasion. Firmly convinced that the absentee would object to their company at the theatre, she went out as though to look for her, but returned in half an hour with a story that she had gone to a friend living some miles away. The result was that as the curtain went up the two young girls might have been seen proudly sitting in front of the box, their sister's lover in the background. For some time they feared it was too good to be real,—that in point of fact they were in a dream. How curiously they gazed at the audience, how deep was the interest they took in the fortunes of the well-born boy who was stolen by gipsies but eventually restored to his rightful position! The young auditors were half beside themselves with excitement; indeed, it was not without some difficulty that Miss Emily was saved from tumbling headlong out of the box. Returning home, they were met at the street-door by their sister, who, indignant at the loss of an evening's amusement and *tête-à-tête* with her lover, gave them a sound cuffing and sent them to bed without supper. That night marks the great turning-point in the career of Miss Fowler, the madcap we have spoken of. The two girls resolved to seek their fortune on the stage. Every play they could obtain possession of was eagerly devoured. Before going to sleep and getting up they would practise "falls" upon the bed, and in playtime would strike effective attitudes in the yard. Their mother was shocked beyond measure at the idea of their going on the stage, and in the result Miss Fowler ran away from home and joined two ladies who

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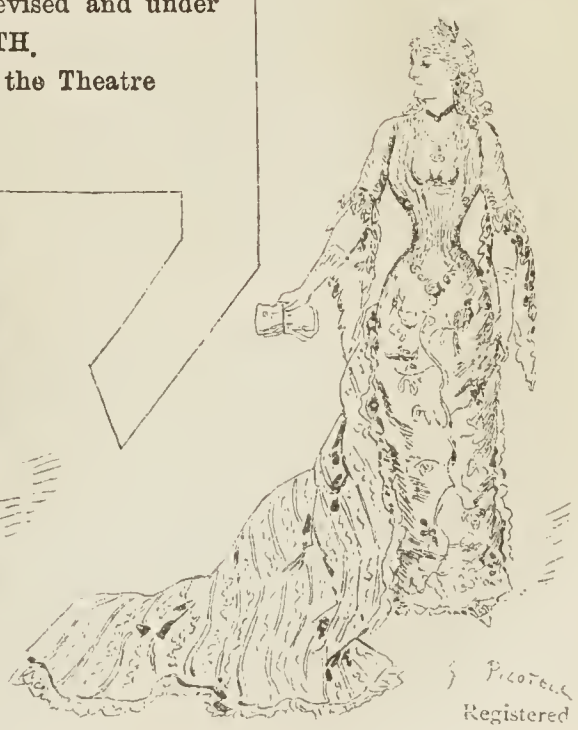

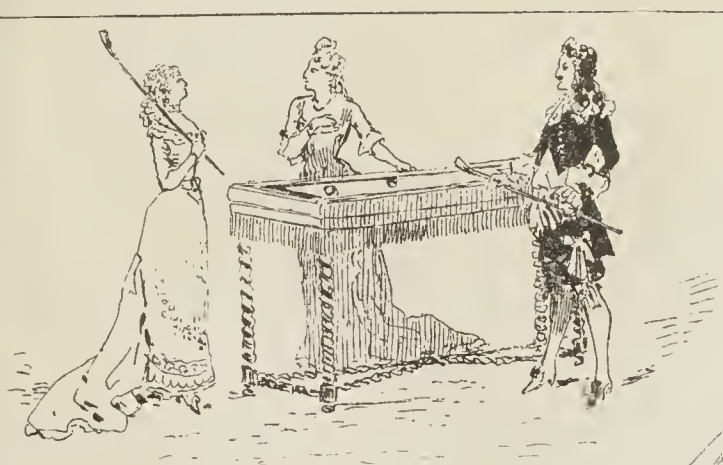

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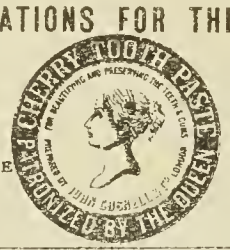

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were about to travel on the Continent. In 1868, having passed some time in France and Germany, she appeared at the Royalty Theatre in the burlesque of *Black-Eyed Susan and Humbug*. The parts allotted to her were very small, but she did so well in them that Mr. Hollingshead gave her a place at the Gaiety Theatre, where she had the advantage of supporting Miss Farren in burlesque and Mr. Alfred Wigan in *Lucky Friday* and other pieces. That she turned this advantage to good account was made apparent by her performance at the Charing Cross Theatre of Mrs. Marchmont in Mr. Wybert Reeve's comedy *Not so Bad after All*, but it was not until she appeared at the Olympic as Lady Betty Noel in *Clancarty* that her talents found adequate employment. Her acting as the merry and impulsive and high-spirited court beauty was full of archness, humour, and gaiety. The manner in which she coquetted with her lover and contrived to steal a kiss from him, the appropriation of the key, her demure air in the presence of her somewhat stately and reserved friend,—all this and a good deal more will not soon be forgotten. In the *Two Orphans* she came forward as the blind girl, a character as different from that of Lady Betty as can well be imagined. Her versatility, however, proved equal to the task set before her. But for a slight want of emotional power her performance would have been truly great. The vacant stare of her eyes, the expression of patient agony in her face, and the loving accents of her voice combined to form a most pathetic piece of acting. In the *School for Intrigue* as Mr. Mortimer entitled his spirited adaptation of *Le Mariage de Figaro*, she made another step in advance by her impersonation of Suzanne, originally played by no less an actress than Mdlle. Contat. Miss Fowler's name is also associated with two or three characters which in other than competent hands would be worse than ineffective—Constance in the *Love Chase*, Helen in the *Hunchback*, and Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*. In the first of these she is delightfully vivacious and natural, exactly such a lady as would plague a Master Wildrake almost out of his wits. Her enthusiasm is infectious when, speaking of the chase, she says :—

> I love it ;
> To wood and glen, hamlet, and town, it is
> A laughing holiday ! Not a hill-top
> But seems alive !

Miss Fowler, in fact, has made great progress in her art in a comparatively short time, and is probably destined to fill the place once occupied by Mrs. Nisbett. The child is father to the man or woman, and is it not easy to understand that the elfish girl who at the age of twelve played off that wicked trick upon her sister should be Lady Betty Noel and Suzanne to the life.

The Round Table.

PANTOMIMICAL.

By Henry J. Byron.

I WAS walking down the Strand one foggy November evening some sixteen years ago with that charming companion, genial wit, and thorough gentleman, the late Francis Talfourd, when he suddenly stopped short opposite the can of a peripatetic hot-potato-man and taking a long "sniff" observed, "Ha-ah, that potato-can smells deliciously, it smells just like the Pantomimes." There was no doubt about it, something had gone wrong with the interior of the "can," and the odour it emitted *was* suggestive of a Pantomime. To any one who asks me what a pantomime "smells like" I should reply it includes a touch of gas, a *soupçon* of orange-peel, a dash of red fire, and a decided flavour of exploded crackers. Any one in the habit of going to the play will recognise this unsavoury but (to a boy) most attractive combination; and as for the man who has forgotten his first sniff of Astley's, he is simply unworthy the consideration of his fellow-creatures.

Reader, you recollect your first pantomime, of course. I remember mine. It was performed a good many more years ago than one cares to mention, though people with unpleasantly long and strong memories will no doubt soon fix the date. It was at Covent Garden Theatre, and the subject was *The Castle of Otranto*. I have forgotten all about much finer spectacles since then, but the greater portion of that evening's entertainment is as firm in my recollection as the sensation-scene in the last new melodrama. Never shall I forget the immensely comic effect of the big head—not a mere helmet, mind you, but an actual face, or profile rather, on the simple "Chinese shadows" system, I suppose, to which rose slowly a hand with fingers extended, and the thumb being placed at the extremity of the nose the picture of contempt and terror became complete. No wonder the hitherto rubicund-visaged guards turned ghastly white, having of course turned *round* previously to become so; for the times were simpler then, and, very small child as I was, I was not a bit taken in by the movement, though I heartily applauded the result. There was a wonderful description by Horncastle of the sudden appearance of the mysterious head, some of the words and tune of which I have never forgotten—

"It fixed itself ha—a—ard
In the great Court Ya—a—a—a—rd
Of the Castle of O—TRAN—TO!"

The terrible and portentous depth of Horncastle's "To!" still rumbles through my brain.

I wonder how many years it was after this that, sitting next that delightful children's-poet and universal humorist, E. L. Blanchard, I touched upon the subject of this old pantomime, when without moving a muscle he observed, "Yes, I recollect it—I ought, *I had a hand in writing it.*" Remembering that *The Castle of Otranto* was produced at old Covent Garden under Madame Vestris's management, and that E. L. Blanchard is still writing pantomimes, and doing so as successfully as ever, one's admiration is even excelled by one's surprise; and personally I feel compelled to remark with the man in the farce, that at the time to which I have alluded "I was a very *very* little boy."

A considerable change has come over the spirit of pantomime recently, and one in particular, which is by no means for the better. A few years back the audacious author who would have ventured to mix up two or more popular fairy-tales and present a pantomime founded on a couple or perhaps three subjects badly blended into one by no means homogeneous whole, would have raised an outcry in every right-minded nursery, and have provoked the contempt and anger of every playgoer of the age of five. For my part the announcement of *Cinderella, or Harlequin Dick Turpin and the Old Woman who had so many Children She Didn't Know What to Do,* or any such illegitimate conglomeration, rouses my indignation almost as much as does a clown who plays seven musical instruments and does it all over again without an *encore.* Clowns! Were those of our childhood really funnier than their successors of to-day? I fancy they were, as a rule, and Tom Matthews, when I was ten years old, afforded me the keenest enjoyment. I may observe that, at that period of life, I believe the human intellect to be in the stage of development most fitted to pass a critical opinion on the merits of clowns. At least it used to be, but the modern ten-year-old playgoer is a more dillettante and difficult-to-be-pleased young gentleman than he was some thirty years or so ago. Tom Matthews's style was founded on Grimaldi's, and he was nothing of an acrobat, but relied on a jolly round face, a mouth like Piccadilly Circus, a rich semi-hoarse roaring voice, and undoubted powers of pantomime. The late Paul Herring ran him hard, in my estimation, though Tom Barry exceeded everybody as a "circus" clown; and I remember once seeing him "off the stage" at the Vauxhall Gardens, and following him about with staring eyes and a beating heart for two long hours, trying to muster up the courage to ask him the time. Clowns, it seems to me, are now too "awfully clever," and I don't suppose there is one in a dozen but would look upon a call

for "Hot codlins" as a personal affront. Pantaloons and harlequins are probably pretty much the same as they have been for years, though the former are too apt to talk, and the latter think more of dancing than of the supposed attributes of the owner of the magic bat. When Mr. W. S. Gilbert played harlequin at the Gaiety in the amateur pantomime a year ago, I saw for the first time for years a consistent impersonation of the character. Albeit further practice and increased confidence might have improved certain small details, the representation, as a piece of sustained pantomime action with *a meaning in it*, was, I admit, to me refreshing.

That splendour has gone a great way to obliterate the actual *fun* of pantomime there can be no doubt. When William Beverly constructed his great scene in *The Island of Jewels*, having previously, I think, done something of the same kind but less elaborate in *The Golden Branch*, he raised a manager's "monster." "The Transformation Scene" became an immediate institution. Just at the very time when the author has wound up his story and tied his threads together, he is horrified by a stage-managerial announcement that "at least a quarter of an hour more is required to set the Transformation Scene." This is very like telling the "funny man" at an evening party that the supper would not be ready for some time, and he must sing a few more humorous ditties. The fact is, the funny man is played out, and, worst of all, has sung the great comic scena always reserved for his climax. As one who has suffered from "Transformation Scenes," I protest against their undue importance, and I believe nine-tenths of the audience would rather get to the "fun" of the comic scenes a good deal sooner—of course, providing that there *is* any comic scene! once the principal feature of the pantomime, *now*, save in special instances, a mere tag to the drama, a bunch of paper strips to the great big kite. But I find at this point I have overreached my fair share of space; and a decided notion that I am writing myself down a fogey suggests itself to me as I turn over the pages I have covered. Consequently it seems to me I had better finish; consequently, I do.

SOME PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF ALFRED WIGAN.

By Tom Taylor.

MY acquaintance with Alfred Wigan dates from my earliest association with the London stage in 1844. Fresh from Cambridge, a barrister having duly eaten my terms, and awaiting briefs, I had been drawn to the theatre by a bent dating from the early

days when I set up as manager of a company of puppets—happy manager who could make his own actors, and yet get all the credit for it without earning their ill-will! My sister was my *costumier*; I was builder of my own theatre, painter of my own scenes and writer of my own plays, as well as maker of my own actors—as I may fairly say, and claim no more than my due. A casual acquaintanceship with Albert Smith and Charles Kenny, who were then purveyors in ordinary of light dramatic literature for the Keeleys in their management of the Lyceum, led to my becoming joint author with them of the third rhymed fairy tale—I should say burlesque, but the thing was so different from the notion now conveyed by the word that it would mislead—which they produced at that theatre. The *Forty Thieves* and *Aladdin*, if I remember aright, had preceded it. Miss Woolgar, then a bright young *débutante*, with all the graces of her charming youth, a thorough enjoyment by the funny things her authors gave her to say, and accomplishments natural and acquired as an actress; the inimitable Keeley and his not less inimitable wife, Frank Mathews, and Miss Farebrother, were stars of that Lyceum galaxy. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan also belonged to it. Our subject was *Valentine and Orson*, and it was in connection with his part of Sir Henfrey or Sir Haufrey, I forget which, one of the villains of the piece, that I first knew Alfred Wigan. We began by being shy of each other,—a common element of reserve keeping us for awhile aloof, and, as it were, on guard, and ended by being warm and intimate friends. For some years I occupied part of his house, and in work and play, in and out of the theatre, in household and family companionship, in common intimacies and friendships, we were for a long time as closely associated as two men could be. Looking back to those pleasant times, with every recollection of which the memory of the Wigans is so inseparably connected, I grieve to think that from circumstances beyond my own control, I was not one of the small company who stood by Alfred Wigan's grave on Saturday the 7th of December, in the chill air of the half-frozen God's-acre of Kensal Green.

Wigan had already made his mark, when we were thus thrown together. I am here confining myself to my personal recollections of him; but I may say, briefly, that I believe he was then (1844) a year under my own age, having been born in 1818; that from family reverses he had been forced to break off his training for the University, and to become a teacher in the school where he had been a pupil, and that impatience of this joyless drudgery, with other circumstances not necessary to dwell on here, had led him to the theatre, at first, in the humble position of chorus-singer. But

he was not a man to remain long unnoticed. Intelligent, kindly superiors in the same theatre were sure to find out that the quiet, steady, reserved chorus-singer was a gentleman, with the germs, at least, of an artist. He was thus found out, very soon, I have heard him say, by Adelaide Kemble, of whose kindness to him in those dreary days of obscurity and struggle he always spoke with the most grateful acknowledgment. He first played small parts in the St. James's Theatre, where he had John Parry for comrade in his early essays. Painful and stumbling enough, I dare say they were, for he was keenly susceptible, conscious of every awkwardness and short-coming, with that consciousness enhanced by the sense of being ill-dressed and inexperienced. I remember his telling me of the intense pain that shot through him on overhearing the scornful remark of a lady in a stage box—it should be a warning to ladies to make such remarks with bated breath, if they must make them at all,—as he came on the stage after a somewhat ignominious exit, "Oh here's that wretch again!" "I *was* a wretch," he said when he told me the story, "but I did not want *her* to tell me so. I knew it a great deal too well." Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews too, old friends of his wife's in her Olympic days as Miss Pincott, soon showed themselves friends of his. He had an engagement at Covent Garden under their management; where his earliest mark was made in the part of Achille Blague, a Belgian Guide to the field of Waterloo, in *Gertrude's Cherries*, a piece of Douglas Jerrold's, who had been his father's friend, and was his all his life long, and who was but too glad to give the intelligent young actor a lift. He did well to write him the part of a "Brave Belge," for Wigan's French from the first was perfect, strangely so, considering that he never, as he has often told me, spent more than a few weeks in France. His ear was singularly delicate, and his imitative faculty perfect. He had known an old French gentleman long and intimately, and had closely studied both his French and his broken English, his demeanour and delivery, ways and manners. He never missed an opportunity for such studies, and to these—not to residence in France—he owed the consummate truth of his stage-Frenchmen.

He had created other parts besides Blague before I knew him, but this he used to refer to as the most useful of his early successes. Another, I think, was Cool in the original cast of *London Assurance* at Covent Garden. But he could not fail to "score" whenever he got the chance; for there was brains, as well as imitative cleverness, in all he did from the first. He knew, and showed, that in all parts, short or long, trifling or important, there is room for mind to set its stamp; and that the effect of that

impress, in the long run, on the leaven of intelligent spectators which may be counted upon in every audience, is out of all proportion to the prominence of the part. No man casts his bread on the waters with more certainty of finding it after many days than the actor. Alfred Wigan has impressed me as one of the most markedly and innately intellectual of all actors I have known. He was the only manager, and one of the very few actors I have had to do with, who could give a reason for his belief or disbelief in a play before its production. His instinct of the exigencies and conditions of dramatic effect was acute and usually to be trusted; and I always found discussion of such matters with him of the utmost value to me as a play-wright. His suggestions of alterations were invariably worth weighing, and his advice to actors and instruction as stage-manager of quite unusual value. I should say that in these, as in all points of stage intelligence he had a rival, and, where anything was to be done, a most effective coadjutor, in his wife. I can only attribute it to a constitutional apathy and timidity, arising probably from organic weakness of the heart which periodically disabled him, marred his career both as manager and actor, and culminated in the attack which carried him off at the age of sixty-one, that he did not both attempt and achieve more as an actor. I should have thought him, of all actors I have known, the best fitted to succeed in certain parts, and those high and difficult ones, of Shakspere's,—Hamlet for example. His Bassanio had great grace and distinction, but he seems to me to have been capable of Shylock. He could not be vulgar; he appreciated and read blank verse beautifully. He could analyze and depict the brain-workings of a character to the most delicate *nuances*. Where he was lacking, I have no doubt from organic reasons, was in self-abandonment. He could not yield himself to the tempest and whirlwind of a passion. He suggested habitually rather coolness and phlegm than fire of temperament, though capable of deep feeling on and off the stage, and with rare power of expressing concentrated intensity, as in his Count Priuli in *Retribution*, one of the finest stage delineations I have ever seen of passion held in a leash, and of a deadly purpose, patiently pursued, and inexorably wrought out, yet without forfeiture of tenderness in relations with all except the object of vengeance.

But to return to our early connection at the Lyceum. The rhymed fairy-tales produced at that theatre gave scope to actors who could speak effective lines, and sing funny words to popular airs. Miss Woolgar, the Keeleys, Frank Matthews, the graceful Miss Farebrother, all found parts to fit them. The nigger invasion had not then taken by storm the strongholds of dance

and song; breakdowns and music-hall choruses, with bone and banjo accompaniments, were unknown. I have seen these creeping up, and on, till now, with their attendant deluge of pun for pun's sake and slang *à tout propos,* they have flooded our comic stage and drowned out, alike, grace, and point, sweet song and witty dialogue. Planché then was the Lord and Master of Burlesque. We young hands looked up to him and loved him alike in his person and his work. I wish I could unload myself of my debt of gratitude to that kind, good man, and delightful writer; that I had room to express here my sense of the graceful and harmless amusement he has afforded to so many generations of play-goers, combining in one entertainment pretty story, humorous action, pointed and graceful dialogue, sweet music, beautiful scenery and tasteful costumes, as no man ever before combined them. It was as his humble imitator that I first came into contact, and soon into close intimacy, with Alfred Wigan. He filled very indifferent parts in our rhymed fairy-tales of *Cinderella, Whittington and his Cat,* and the *Enchanted Horse* which followed *Valentine and Orson.* I remember an amusing incident in connection with his part of Alcide Bellepoule, in Whittington. It was during the time of the Pritchard agitation against the French assumption of a protectorate in the South Seas. We had shown our mouse-and-rat haunted sovereign—to whose domains Whittington's ship is consigned—suffering under a French Protector. The part was played by Wigan, made up after the *Prince de Joinville.* The "counterfeit presentment" was talked about; the French ambassador came or sent some one to the theatre, and a grave remonstrance was addressed to the Lord Chamberlain, who, as gravely sent to say that the offensive likeness must be modified. By way of concession, Wigan, who had been playing the part in red trousers, which were not French naval uniform, changed them for blue, which *were,* and the full length, before inexact, was thus corrected, but I never heard of any further remonstrance from the Ambassador, or interference by the Lord Chamberlain. Those were very merry times at the Lyceum; and especially merry were our extempore suppers in the spacious painting room, the finest in London, where we delighted to congregate, painters, actors and authors, over such cheap luxuries as Field-Lane ducks (sheep's-heads), and porter. Wigan was often a partaker of these humble entertainments with Frank Matthews, John Oxenford, Albert Smith, Charles Kenny and the writer, and our genial manager did not disdain to smile upon our feast.

The first part I wrote for Wigan, not in burlesque, was Count Carambole, in a *Trip to Kissengen;* I am not quite sure if this was

before or after my first collaboration with Albert Smith and Charles Kenny. The farce was a joint piece of work, of a college friend, then fresh, like myself, from Trinity, and the writer. It was knocked off at a breath; literally a day's work, my collaborator holding the pen, suggesting and supplying, while I dictated. He had just come from a visit to the watering place where we laid our action, so he supplied a correct *mise-en-scène*. We had the Keeleys, Meadows, and the Wigans in our cast. The piece turned on the misadventures of an aspiring little cockney visitor to Kissengen. Ensnared by the bright eyes of a French *cocotte* (the associate of a French swindler who has carried out a combined scheme for passing forged notes), he is induced to exchange his passport for that of Carambole, hard pressed by the police. He in his turn nearly drives the poor little cockney mad with jealousy, by flirting with his wife (Mrs. Keeley) when, arriving unexpectedly at Kissengen, under the escort of her uncle (Meadows), she finds her faithless spouse gallivanting with Fifine. It was a broad piece of fun and bustle, affording good opportunities to the actors; and was accepted, read, cast, put in rehearsal, with a promptness as rare as refreshing, and ran some fifty nights—a great run in those days. The Wigans contributed their full share to the success, and it enabled him to score another mark, which, however, was far more than repeated, when, in September 1846, he created his admirable combination of pathos, national character and humour, Tourbillon in *To Parents and Guardians*, my third or fourth dramatic venture at the Lyceum. This time, again, the Keeleys,—he in Waddilove the fat fag, and his wife in Bob Nettles, the cock of the school,—contributed to the success of the piece, with the Wigans, for Mrs. Wigan's part of Virginie, the strolling French tambourine-player, was a worthy pendant to her husband's Tourbillon, the poor, shabby, ill-treated, old French master of the sordid suburban school, bullied by the master, tormented by the boys, but true to his feelings and instincts of a gentleman, and stung by oppression to the assertion of them. Though the part has been admirably re-created by Mr. Arthur Cecil, at the Prince of Wales's, I can never forget what it was in the hands of its original impersonator. It was conceived, incubated, brought out, I may say, under his eye, for we were in closest companionship all the time I was at work at it, and it no doubt owed much to his advice and suggestion. But to his acting it was indebted for a life of truth, and a tenderness and depth of pathos, wrought into wonderful harmony with a grotesqueness and oddity quite in keeping with the old man's nationality and perfectly carried out in dress, face, voice and manner. The little drama was a very inartificial production, as I felt painfully

when it was revived last year at the Prince of Wales's. But the part of Tourbillon was a living thing in Wigan's hands; and no one thought of the absurdity of the story while under the spell of his pathetic presentment of down-trodden age, and the rush of hopeless parental yearning suddenly let loose.

Such an embodiment of an author's intentions unites actor and author with a peculiar tie. My relations of intimacy and regard with Wigan were already close, but this made them still closer. His performance of Tourbillon gave him deservedly a high and assured rank in his profession, and was followed by other excellent French impersonations in adaptations of his own, among them *The Model of a Wife*, and *A Thousand Pounds Reward*. Though I was not in a position to do anything for him worthy of note during the engagements which intervened between his Lyceum engagement and his entering on the management of the Olympic in the autumn of 1853, it had been arranged that I should write his opening piece, to accompany Planché's rhymed *àpropos, The Camp at the Olympic*. I had some time before had suggested to me by John Lang, an old Trinity acquaintance, then fresh returned from India, Fouché's *Cohorte Cythèrienne*—a bevy of attractive and abandoned women kept in the minister's pay as decoys—as affording good material for dramatic treatment. I had talked the subject over with its suggester, and even sketched in conversation the outline of a piece in which the idea might be turned to account; but, busy with other things, I had put the idea on one side, when Wigan, to whom I had mentioned it, came to propose it as a good subject for the opening piece at the Olympic. Lang was not in town and I did not know his whereabouts, but sent him a letter to the likeliest address I could think of. In the mean time, as the need was pressing, I began to work at the piece, hoping that my collaborator would turn up in the course of my labour; but he never appeared, so I went on working without him, and the piece was finished and in Wigan's hands, when one day Lang called to tell me he had at last got my letter, which had been following him far and wide, that, not expecting I would ever go to work on the subject he had suggested, he had himself done so without communicating with me; and that his piece had long been finished and in the hands of Webster, who had read and approved of it, and promised to bring it out. Here was a dilemma. Having had reason to doubt the exactness of my informant, I determined to apply to Webster, who, in answer to my letter, told me it was true he *had* received such a piece from Mr. Lang, but that he had never read it, much less promised to bring it out, and that it was very much at its author's disposal. Communicating this to Mr. Lang, I told him that I con-

sidered myself exonerated from all obligation to collaborate with him on the subject; that it had become common property by my oral suggestions when he proposed it, of which he admitted that he had availed himself; that, however, I was willing to waive all question on this point, and to put his piece into Wigan's hands to compare it with mine, and act as he thought fit; that if Wigan chose my piece as it stood, I would waive any right his proceeding had given me, and that his name should stand with mine on the bills; that if Wigan preferred Lang's piece, he should be free to take it, in which case Lang's name should stand alone as author; that if Wigan saw his way to any fusing of the pieces he was to be at liberty to propose it. The result was that Wigan after reading Lang's piece informed the author that it was not a play at all, but a story put into the outward form of a drama; that mine *was* a play, and would, he believed, be an effective one, and that under those circumstances he had no alternative but to produce my play as it stood. I insisted on introducing one sentence from Mr. Lang's play* that he might with a safe conscience stand as my *collaborateur*, and the play was in due time produced with success. The personage of Desmarets, which brought Robson for the first time before the public in an intense character-part, was an after-thought not contemplated in my original sketch of the story, but worked into it after I had seen the actor, then new to London, in the part of the Jew in a travestie of Shylock, which had just before made a sensation at the Olympic, at the close of Mr. Farren's management. The part of Fouché was meant for Wigan; but his theatre not then possessing an actor capable of the part of De Neuville, the lover of Fouché's decoy Marie de Fontanges (originally acted by Mrs. Stirling), he determined to play that part himself, and to entrust Fouché to Emery. Wigan had not before played a serious lover; but his acting of the part showed his power to represent passion, and impart intensity to serious situations, and entirely justified his selection of the part, to which he gave the fervid colour required by De Neuville's creole blood. During the course of Mr. Wigan's management of the Olympic, which was relinquished in 1857, owing to his impaired health, mainly caused, no doubt, by the wear and tear of management combined with acting,—two things that, to my thinking, never should be combined where they can be kept apart.—I wrote for him the parts of John Mildmay in *Still Waters Run Deep*,†

* "Why don't she cheat?" towards the close of the first act.

† Dramatized from Charles de Bernard's story, *Un Gendre*, to which my attention was directed by my friend Mrs. Fanny Kemble. *Retribution* was from the same charming story-teller's *La Peine du Talion*.

which was perfectly suited to his quieter style, and of Count Priuli in *Retribution*, which revealed him in a new phase, as I have already mentioned, of intense but suppressed passion, and steady, sleuth-hound-like, pursuit of revenge. In these three parts he felt himself that he had sounded three distinct strings of his gamut, and, throughout the preparation and acting of them he enlarged my conception, and, still more, that of the public, of his powers. As a manager he was not less careful and conscientious than as an actor; and under his charge the preparation and rehearsal of pieces was what it ought to be, a serious and business-like prelude to their performance.

The principal part which I afterwards wrote for him was that of Chetwynd in the *House or the Home*, an adaptation of Octave Feuillet's *Péril dans la Demeure*, brought out during his engagement at the Adelphi, in 1859; and Major Stonihurst, in *Up at the Hills*, with which he opened his management of the St. James's in October 1860. The piece did not achieve success, though his acting and that of Mrs. Wigan, in Mrs. Colonel Macann, were good enough to deserve it. For the Queen's Theatre, under his management, in 1868, I wrote in collaboration with my friend Mr. Dubourg, the comedy of *New Men and Old Acres*, but reasons which I need not here relate prevented its production there, and it was brought out at the Haymarket in the following year. Since that time I have not been connected with Alfred Wigan as author, and have seen but little of him as friend, but my regard for him was never impaired, though circumstances have separated, and in some degree estranged us.

VARIETY WITH A VENGEANCE.

By E. L. Blanchard.

A CURIOUS essay might be written, not only on the causes and conditions of theatrical success, but on the nature and origin of unfavourable opinions with regard to dramatic performances. Why a piece which delights one audience should be wholly condemned by another, and why the very unfavourable verdict pronounced on a new production should be wholly reversed on succeeding representations, are questions of theatrical metaphysics as yet wholly undiscussed. Among playgoers totally different opinions will be often found to prevail regarding the merits of some particular production or performer. We all know that the standard of excellence for testing the exact value of dramatic novelties is very much like the standard of Cornhill, so long used for measuring distances on the old coach roads leading out of London. Everybody has

heard of it; nobody knows precisely where to look for it. A few hints, which may be regarded as the result of much observation and long experience in matters connected with the stage, may be, perhaps, advantageously contributed to those desirous of pursuing investigations into a somewhat recondite subject.

In the first place, the difference between a wet night and a fine night should always be taken into consideration when estimating the mirth-provoking properties of a new comedy or extravaganza. In a moist atmosphere people enter a theatre with spirits depressed, and in an uncomfortable mood. Damp clothes cling about them, and suggest that the inevitable cold will be but scantily compensated for by the pleasure of the night. In the pit five hundred dripping umbrellas leaning against the knees of five hundred people, who, by taking cab or omnibus, have entered the theatre in a perfectly dry condition, will make a thousand spectators quarrelsome, querulous, and physically indisposed to see the point of a jest or the necessity for laughing at any droll complication of incidents or whimsicality of embodiment. Then playgoers, seated to the extreme right or left of the audience, will judge the capabilities of the performers from quite opposite points of view. Some actors deliver their best speeches on the prompt side, where those favourably placed for observation will detect a subtlety of facial expression which of course escapes the observation of spectators seated at the other extremity of the row of seats. The principle is, of course, equally applicable if the actress, from the necessity of the situation, has to make her strongest point in the opposite corner. Concordance of opinion between long-sighted people and short-sighted people is hardly to be expected, but it is surprising how utterly unconscious they severally are of the reasons why they differ in an estimation of the greatness of a tragedian or the grandeur of a spectacle. Besides those who have a defect in their vision we have to consider those deficient in the power of hearing. Then comes into consideration the mood and temperament of the individual on the night in question. A radically bad or hastily-swallowed dinner will effectually destroy all disposition to enjoyment, and utterly annihilate the capability of appreciation. There are some old comedies which, received with rapture at night, always fall flat at morning performances, though sustained by the same company. What Müller, the German poet, said of his lyric would equally apply to many representations of the legitimate drama under these circumstances.

> This song was made to be sung by night,
> And he who reads it in broad daylight
> Will never read the mystery right;
> And yet it is childlike, easy.

With this key placed in the hand of the intelligent newapaper reader, the frequent discrepancy in the judgment passed by even competent dramatic critics will be readily accounted for. Without referring to some strangely varying opinions expressed in the morning papers, it may suffice to quote as the most recent example of this divergence of opinion the comments made by the excellent critics of the *Globe* and the *Echo* on the performance of *Macbeth* at Drury-lane. "The interpretation," says the dramatic critic of the *Globe*, "with the single exception of Mrs. Hermann Vezin, whose Lady Macbeth rose in the later scenes to absolute power, was incompetent." In the *Echo* we are assured the performance "was not bungled by imperfect readings, nor marred by wretched acting on the part of any of the principals, nor made tantalizing by bad stage management. Mrs. Vezin's Lady Macbeth, from whatever cause, may be described as a modified failure. As a whole, the impersonation produced no effect upon the audience." According to the *Globe*, "Altogether unsatisfactory was the rendering of the music attributed to Locke." According to the *Echo*, "Locke's witch music, so long associated with *Macbeth*, was admirably rendered."

Equally wide discrepancies are exhibited in the New York Press. Let us note what the critics of the leading morning journals have to say of *Carmen*. *Tribune*.—"It is a strange medley of new things and old, rare beauties and hackneyed theatric effects, the finest sentiment and the jingle of empty tunes." *Times*.—"It is a mere *pot pourri* of singing and dancing. Of the music we cannot speak much more highly. It comprises a few light, taking melodies, rather prettily accompanied, but, with the exception already referred to, that is all." *Per contra: Herald*.—"Musically, *Carmen* is a remarkable work, and in one sense—that of consistency—it is one of the most successful that has been written." *World*.—"The instrumentation is throughout marked by a scholarship that could not fail to be recognized by all practical musicians, and an elegance which will make it acceptable to opera-going audiences." The critics generally speak kindly of Miss Minnie Hauck's début in New York, but disagree on essential points. *Times*.—"If she has gained something in her sojourn abroad, she has also lost something in the sweetness and rounded smoothness of her voice." *Tribune*.—(Per contra). "Her voice has gained much since she went away, both in fullness and strength, and she has developed dramatic powers of which we should hardly have thought her capable." *Herald*.—"Taken all in all, the impression she made was flattering." *World*.—"She did not win the sympathy of her audience by her singing. Her voice is deficient

in the sympathetic quality that wins miscellaneous audiences." It would puzzle the proverbial Philadelphia lawyer to say what to make of such flatly contradictory testimony as this.

AT THE WESTMINSTER PLAY.

By A Queen's Scholar.

THE evening set apart for the first performance of a comedy by Terence or Plautus at the "publique schoole for grammar, rhetoricke, poetrie, and the Latin and Greek languages," as the seat of learning in Dean's Yard was correctly described by an old writer, has at length arrived; and, proud in the possession of the card which entitles one to "assist" at the ceremony, you drive up to the Dean's archway. The dull roar of the street traffic is in your ears as you alight, but on passing through that striking specimen of Norman architecture you seem to have passed far from the busy haunts of men in a few moments. The venerable Abbey towers above you, and the silence which usually prevails here is broken only by a few footsteps and voices. The way to the College lies by the southern side of the cloisters. Tread lightly, for beneath the stones are the ashes of monks and abbots who have been dead I don't know how many centuries. And now you are in Dean's Yard, and the somewhat gloomy-looking building on the other side of the racquet-court is St. Peter's College. Near the entrance stands a smart young Queen's scholar in evening dress and a heavy cloak-gown nearly touching the ground. He directs you up a flight of wide stone steps to the dormitory, where another and older Queen's scholar, having looked at your card of invitation, passes you through a barrier into the long and lofty apartment which serves as the theatre. The walls are covered with curtains, and at one end a "stage" is visible.

Ushered to your seat, you look about with mingled curiosity and surprise. The masters' pit is crowded with guests, while the members of the school, resplendent in the insignia of their office, are assembled on the left. Near the stage, at right angles, are a few rows of seats for "young old Westminsters," now fresh from University, Woolwich, or Aldershot. In a line with these youths, who, to put it mildly, are not undemonstrative, are the ladies' seats. Several Queen's scholars are specially appointed to provide the fair visitors with programmes, printed "arguments," and refreshments,

—certainly an enviable occupation. Behind you are many rows of guests, and at the end may be discerned a number of young scholars charged with the duty of leading off the applause. They carry long canes, which they tap on the ground when the time comes for a burst of laughter or acclamation. If any scholar in that part of the hall should be slow to appreciate the force of one of the dramatist's jokes, or at any rate should not be moved to applause, he will probably receive a smart rap on the toes. The claque is headed by two Queen's scholars, known on these occasions as "god-keepers." Eventually, as Big-Ben chimes half-past seven, Mr. Dan Godfrey's band strikes up behind the scenes; the captain of the school, in court dress, leads the Head-Master's wife into the theatre; her husband, looking as dignified as possible, walks in to the exhilarating strains of "See the Conquering Hero Comes;" the Dean, with his sharp features lighted up by a pleasant smile, may be seen in the place of honour in the stalls. Then come the distinguished persons who have been bidden to the intellectual feast, a number of old Westminsters bringing up the rear.

Everything is ready; the master touches a hand-bell as a signal for the music to stop, and the captain of the Queen's scholars comes before the green curtain and delivers a prologue in Latin iambics. The names of the old Westminsters who have died since the last performance are gracefully referred to in this effusion, which is written by the Head-Master. The performance is then proceeded with. The play is Terence's *Phormio*, the plot of which is derived from Apollodorus. It soon becomes evident that the difficulties involved in the representation of a Latin play by English youths will be fairly overcome. The delivery of the Roman dramatist's lines is never less than respectable, often effective. The actors may not be at their ease in the ancient Greek costume, but where is the company of amateurs that would? Then, although the "coaches" have more regard for tradition than for new ideas, some of the impersonations are marked by original thought, and the unity and smoothness of the performance as a whole shows that the scholars entrusted with small parts are not less industriously looked after by the masters than the others. Geta and Phormio are in competent hands, but the representatives of Demipho, Phædria, and Sophrona take a by no means inconsiderable share of the honours of the evening. The epilogue, which is written in Latin elegiacs by one of the masters or an old Westminster, is intended to be a humorous skit upon events and follies of the day, and for some years past has been published *in extenso* by *The Times*. It is delivered by the actors in the comedy, now attired in evening dress. Finally, in accordance with time-honoured custom, the

prompters come before the curtain and pass a college cap to the old Westminsters, who fill it with money. Out of the sum thus collected the cost of the performance is paid, the residue being divided amongst the actors.

Between the acts the scene inside and outside the theatre is of the most animated kind. No sooner has the curtain fallen than the "young old Westminsters" jump up and push their way out. Some may be found renewing old friendships in the passages; some brave the cold air for the sake of a cigarette; some get behind the scenes to chat with actors and quaff the mysterious beverage known as "sack-whey." Few things in life are more pleasant to witness than the meetings at Westminster of old schoolfellows who have not seen each other for years, and to hear them speak of old quarrels and scrapes and pleasures on the very scene of their occurrence. Inside the theatre the scene is not less bright. Everybody is chatting with his neighbour; the Queen's scholars appointed to attend to the ladies are manifesting considerable energy in the discharge of their duties; the leaders of the claque are making short work of some "sack-whey" and sherry just brought to them; grave-looking divines are arguing a point in connexion with the play, and many ladies are indulging in flirtation under difficulties. By half-past ten o'clock all is over, and as the audience leave—not, as at a theatre, in a stream, but in groups—the boys go downstairs for supper and to talk of what has been done and left undone in the performance.

A HAUNTED ACTRESS.

By Arthur Escott.

THE story we are about to relate is taken from the autobiography of the queenly actress who a century and a quarter ago was dividing the homage of Parisian playgoers with Mdlle. Dumessiel. The early life of Hippolyte Clairon was not of a nature to suggest that exceptional celebrity awaited her in a walk of art which depends so much on culture as tragedy-acting. Madame Clairon mère, who is said to have been a menial in the theatre, was a coarse-minded and illiterate person, and the only books which the girl could procure in her youth—it is a wonder that she was ever taught to read at all—were collections of stories relating to ghosts, hobgoblins, and other such interesting things. The result was that she became intensely superstitious, to

the no small amusement in later years of men who were swayed by the materialistic tendencies of the age. With this brief preface I proceed to tell the story of her persecution by the ghost of a discarded lover, helplessly leaving my readers to solve the problem it presents in what manner they may.

In 1744, soon after her début in Paris, Clairon made the acquaintance of M. de S——, a merchant's son. He was about thirty years of age, of good appearance, and clever at penning sonnets to her eyebrows. Before long he became desperately enamoured of her, and was supposed by the gossips of the *foyer* to have inspired her with a warmer feeling than friendship. But as time went on the actress found it necessary to stop the acquaintance. Her lover was of a gloomy and misanthropic turn, and wished her to fly with him from the world to some wild and deserted spot. This interesting project was not destined to be realized. Clairon loved her art, revelled in the applause she drew down, and had had too large and varied an experience of life to be very romantic. In the end she refused to receive letters from or to see him. M. de S—— pined away, and one evening in the summer of 1746 was told that his hours were numbered. He then sent a message to the actress, pathetically entreating her to see him once more. Clairon, who at that time was entertaining an Intendant des Finances and other friends at supper, was advised not to go, as her presence would embitter rather than solace his last moments. This advice she took, and soon after he had received her apparently harsh reply the unfortunate man died.

For the next eighteen months or two years, according to her own account, the actress was subjected to a supernatural persecution. M. de S—— died as the clocks were striking eleven, and as soon as the sound had ceased a long unearthly cry rang through the room in which Clairon was entertaining her friends. The guests were lost in astonishment and terror; the actress, recognizing in the cry the voice of her lover, very naturally fainted. "Really, Mdlle.," said the Intendant, with ghastly humour as she recovered, "The gentleman who has the honour to possess your affections should be told that his signals are much too loud." But, as events soon proved, this was no matter for jesting. The cry was frequently repeated at the actress's windows at the same hour. The police kept watch both outside and inside, but could discover nothing. Nor was the power of the perturbed spirit confined to the actress's house. One night, as she was taking leave at her door of a President who had escorted her home, the frightful cry rang out between them. At another time, while riding with her in a coach from the Rue Saint Honoré, Pierre Roselli—a handsome high-

spirited young actor, who could "rage like Cethegus or like Cassius die," declared that unless she invoked the ghost and received a reply there and then he would not believe a word of her story. The actress did as she was asked; the cry was again heard, and when the coach arrived at its destination the two players were found in a swoon! The form of the persecution was then slightly varied. Instead of the cry, she heard the report of a gun at her window. The houses in the street were placed under surveillance, but to no purpose. On one occasion she was invited to a little nocturnal fête at Mdlle. Dumesnil's, and at eleven o'clock left the Rue de Bussy in a fiacre with her femme de chambre. Her way was through the boulevards, then but slightly garnished with houses. "Did not M. de S—— die there?" asked the tiring woman, pointing to two houses which stood out in sharp relief against a moonlit sky. "From what I have heard, I think he did," was the answer. The gun-report was again heard! The coachman, not doubting that thieves were at hand, lashed his horse into a gallop, and Clairon and her servant arrived at their destination more dead than alive.

Therewith the persecution may be said to have ended. The unearthly cry and the scarcely less terrible gun-report were not again heard. The ghost, indeed, gave token of its presence by a clapping of hands, which, as reminding the actress of the applause of the playgoers, had, if anything, a consoling effect. By-and-by this was changed to soft and melodious music, as though the ghost were lapsing into an amiable and forgiving mood. At this time, anxious for tranquillity, Clairon removed from the Rue de Bussy to the Rue de Marais, to the house in which Racine had written his greatest tragedies and died, and in which Voltaire had closed the eyes of Adrienne Lecouvreur. The latter had embellished it in many ways, but in Clairon's eyes the bare walls would have been sufficient attraction. She had not been there long when a strange old lady desired to see her, and the request was at once granted. For some time they gazed at each other in silence, and with instinctive interest. The stranger at length found her tongue, and, after a good deal of circumlocution, came to the object of her visit. The friend of M. de S——, she had been with him during his last moments, and now sought out the actress to ask why she had made him so unhappy. Clairon, in reply, related the story, premising that the heart was not subservient to the will. "I cannot blame you, Mdlle.," said the old lady, "though you may be said to have killed him. More especially were his last moments embittered by your refusal to come to his bedside. He kept his eyes intently fixed upon the clock until his servant returned with your message.

'Wretch!' he vehemently exclaimed; the unfeeling wretch! But she will gain nothing by it; *I will follow her after my death as persistently as I have followed her in my life!*' He died with these terrible words on his lips."

HERE WE ARE AGAIN!

By Henry S. Leigh.

I RECOLLECT—full well I do—
That, in my life's remoter times,
I felt aggrieved when sitting through
The openings of the pantomimes.
Their puns could never make me smile;
Their dances and their songs were vain.
I sat awaiting all the while
The wished-for "Here we are again!"

I scarcely watched one gallant fight
Young Jack the Giant-Killer waged,
The tale began to bore me quite:—
My mind was far away engaged.
The welcome end came by and by;
The giants all were duly slain.
The transformation-scene was nigh,
And with it "Here we are again!"

It mattered not a fig to *me*
What Cinderella said or did;
I fancied Whittington to be
A most intrusive little kid.
Whatever incidents occurred
I treated with a cool disdain;
For nothing touched me till I heard
The cry of "Here we are again!"

Mad wag, to childhood ever dear!
No moral qualms thy life perplex'd.
Thine only maxim, it is clear,
Was "bismuth first, and pleasure next."
And Pleasure brimmed for thee a cup
With no alloying drop of pain.
What worlds of mirth it conjured up,
Thy magic "Here we are again!"

Thy figure, too,—how boldly quaint!
Thy wide and theft-impelling hose.
And what profusely scattered paint
Besmirched the brow—the cheeks—the nose!
Forget thee, merriest of mimes?—
Nay—long as Mem'ry shall remain,
Its pow'r shall bring me oftentimes
Thine olden "Here we are again!"

Portraits.

XII.—MR. TERRY.

IN this world, we are philosophically told, nothing can be regarded as certain, and the general truth of the remark will be apparent to the most unreflecting mind. But to every rule there are conspicuous exceptions, and those who go to see a piece in which Mr. Terry appears may reckon with absolute certainty upon being hugely diverted. He is better at one time than another, for actors, like everybody else, are not always the same in health (a fact too often lost sight of by the playgoing public); but at his worst he brings down the house whenever the chance of doing so comes. In truth, he is one of the drollest comedians now on the stage. His acting displays a keen sense of humour, especially in comedies of a somewhat farcical complexion. Even when he falls into extravagance,—and this is not unfrequently the case,—the voice of criticism is drowned in laughter and applause. He is also seen to considerable advantage in parts which blend humour with rough homely pathos, as his Lieutenant Lamb in *Old Sailors*, not to speak of many other impersonations, has shown. These natural gifts for the stage have been perfected by assiduous study and practice. Many years elapsed before he obtained a footing in London, although it is difficult to suppose that the audiences before which he played at the outset of his career were not intensely amused by his efforts, and that echoes of the merriment he excited did not reach the ears of metropolitan managers. Born in London a little more than thirty-four years ago, Mr. Terry, after going to school in due form, was placed in a merchant's office in the City. Fancy him perched on a high stool with a quill in his ear and a ledger before him! But while his eyes were upon columns of figures his thoughts were far away. His sympathies were with the theatre; and if at any time you could have lifted the lid of his desk you would have found a number of programmes of amateur performances in which he had taken part. Eventually, in the summer of 1863, he abandoned the merchant's office for the stage, appearing at Christchurch as Lowry Looby in *Eily O'Connor*. During the next four years he was a man-of-all-work at various theatres, and it is on record that he frequently played as many as eighteen parts in one week. In 1867 he emerged

from obscurity at one bound. His performance of the Clown in the revival at Manchester of *Antony and Cleopatra* not only won the approbation of the local critics, but was spoken of at some length by the *Morning Post*. In 1870, when Mr. James and Mr. Thorne left the Strand, Mr. Edward Terry was engaged for that theatre, and it is only his due to state that he well upheld the reputation which the "merry little Strand" had so long enjoyed as the chief home of burlesque in London. His first part was King Toledo in Mr. Byron's *Pilgrim*,—"a miserable old monarch, attired in a semi-modern coat and pantaloons, and relieving habitual melancholy by frantic terpsichorean explosions, varying the routine of the ordinary breakdown with eccentricities after the manner of Callot." But this was not the only walk of theatrical art which he pursued with profit. His Calino in *Nemesis* and Emilion in *Loo* will long be remembered with pleasure; but it was in farcical comedy with an element of pathos—as Cassidy in *Old Soldiers* and Lieutenant Lamb in *Old Sailors*—that he gave us the best and most characteristic examples of his talents. His Captain Ginger in *Weak Woman* was a piece of farce-acting of a high order, and his Paul Pry proved so popular that the piece was played nearly a hundred times in succession. In 1876 he took his leave of the Strand Theatre in an address written for him by Mr. Byron, and since that time has been the principal member of the Gaiety company. The successes he achieved in *Little Don Cæsar de Bazan*, *Little Doctor Faust*, and *Jeames* are so recent that we need only mention the names of the pieces on this occasion. Mr. Terry is still but a young man, and in all probability has a prosperous career before him. There is one character in which he will not be seen by the playgoing public, but in which, we think, he does not appear to less advantage than in any other. In the afternoons not set apart for Gaiety *matinées* a gentleman may be seen playing a game of romps with his children in the garden of a pretty villa in the Grove at Hammersmith, his wife, who was formerly connected with the stage, looking on with an approving smile. That gentleman is Mr. Edward Terry; and the joyous laughter of the children, no doubt, is even more grateful to him than that which he excites a few hours afterwards at the theatre in the Strand.

THE THEATRE No. 6 NEW SERIES. WOODBURYTYPE

Yours Sincerely

Edward Terry

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LOCK & WHITFIELD, LONDON.

Feuilleton.

A DISTINGUISHED AMATEUR.

By Annie Thomas (Mrs. Pender Cudlip).

"THERE is no doubt about it! Mrs. Percivall-Rowe will take the shine out of us all—out of every one of us! She's the best amateur out-and-out."

The speaker is Henry Dashwood, Esq., of "Hillside," near a midland county town. He is an authority within his own borders on all matters theatrical, for he has a pleasant large house, a competency, colossal ideas as regards entertaining, a perfectly-arranged pretty little theatre, illimitable faith in his own powers of farce-writing (the honour has befallen him of having had two farces rejected) and light comedy acting (he is always ready to take a part in the *Happy Pair*, when that refuge for the dramatically destitute is dragged to the fore, at an hour's notice, in the dullest of country houses), and a huge admiration for Mrs. Percivall-Rowe.

"And yet you've got Miss Cumberland down to take leading-lady, Harry! That's rather a mistake, isn't it? Hillside will explode, and poor Mrs. Dashwood will be nowhere while those two female Counts are flaming about; by-the-way! how *does* your wife like it all?"

"She's a jolly good notion of playing herself, between ourselves, Allicourt, old boy," Mr. Dashwood replies confidentially. "She played Portia to my Shylock once. And she makes a capital Juliet—plenty of hair, you know, eyelashes that tell, and just one of those convenient little figures that pad up to anything—nothing natural to interfere with you; the devil of it is, she's never word-perfect; but then, no one listens to an amateur Juliet, you only look at her."

"Does Mrs. Percivall-Rowe play Juliet?"

"She does! In her *répertoire* this time she has Juliet, Desdemona, Rosalind, Mercy Merrick——"

"No!"

"Yes; why not? She'll do it fifty times better than it's ever been done before. And as for the Shaksperian characters! 'pon

my word, after seeing them professionally handled of late years, you'll hardly know them when you see her in them."

"And where will Miss Cumberland be while your distinguished amateur is emaciating—I mean vitalizing—Juliet and Mercy Merrick."

"I shall have to square her!" Mr. Dashwood says, thoughtfully.

"Square her, and round her, and generally prune and pare down her natural wrath. Now, *do* you suppose that she'll subordinate herself to Mrs. Percivall-Rowe?—to a woman who is 'stagey' without having a particle of professional skill or subtlety."

"She'll have still enough to make you retract your adverse opinion of her powers, and subtlety enough to make Miss Cumberland satisfied to take second parts," Dashwood replies in a perfectly assured tone. "Why, Allicourt, you'll be a baby in her hands, keen dramatic critic as you are. When you've heard her do "My Bill" you'll be astounded." It's the story of a girl who sticks to a brutal ruffian who finishes on the gallows; the woman sticks to him and loves him all through, and creeps out at last in cotton rags to see him hung."

"A pleasing and novel subject."

"Well, it mayn't be either novel or pleasing, but when you've heard Mrs. Percivall-Rowe do it, you'll say it has the fellow-feeling in it that makes the whole of us kin, you know."

"Handsome woman, ain't she?"

"Magnificent! her arms are a great feature in her acting; you should see her do the Bateman curse; it's all 'arm,' you know, in that, and by Jove! hers tell and no mistake; and she's no amateurish nervousness or bosh of that kind about her: she goes at it as if she had had the training of fifty Cumberlands."

"Ah! that's good about the 'training'; but do you know, Dashwood, I don't find amateurs *are* given to the vice of nervousness as a rule; take yourself, for example. Neville doesn't go through Clancarty, or anything else, with fewer qualms than you do."

Dashwood modestly admits the soft impeachment, but at the same time remarks that he is a 'born actor,' and that it is an understood thing (by himself) that he has no more need to feel nervous than he has to study any part he may elect to take up.

"And Mrs. Percivall-Rowe is like me in that respect," he continues rapturously. "She has over a part three or four times just to get every word perfect, and she holds the whole thing in the hollow of her hand. She played Pauline to my Claude last year at

Sir Disny Drake's, at an hour's notice, and I assure you that a Terry wouldn't have done it better."

Mr. Dashwood gets up in his enthusiasm and strides about the room. In passing the window he discerns his wife's brougham approaching the front door.

"She has just come! My wife has been to the station to fetch her; let us go to the drawing-room, and have some tea with them."

"Thank you, no!" Allicourt says languidly; "I don't like women and tea before dinner."

The drawing-room at Hillside is a spotlessly clean, dustless, neat, glittering, and altogether congenial apartment. The housemaids at Hillside "have a time of it" daily in that drawing-room! Mrs. Dashwood is happy in the proud consciousness of duty done towards that apartment whenever she enters it, and everybody else who looks into it is profoundly miserable. Mrs. Percivall-Rowe has already ensconced herself in the easiest chair when Mr. Dashwood goes in to greet her.

"I hope my wife has made you feel comfortable—at home, in fact?" he says with a deferential air that places himself, his wife, his house, his men-servants and maid-servants, and his cattle more entirely at her disposal than any obedient circumlocutionary form of words could have done.

"Mrs. Dashwood has left me to myself—the kindest thing a new hostess can do when one has been the victim of over-attention from an old hostess," Mrs. Percivall-Rowe replies, with a ringing laugh. "My dear Mr. Dashwood, you had better understand at once that 'women delight me not,' and act accordingly. I'll consider myself *your* guest, if you please; and then Mrs. Dashwood will be relieved of all responsibility, and I shall have the onus taken off me of having to be grateful for efforts to entertain me that I fail to appreciate."

It is neither a graceful, a grateful, nor a womanly speech; and Mr. Dashwood feels acutely that it is none of these things. Nevertheless, he is so completely a slave to his ambition to secure the dramatic services of the accomplished lady who utters it, that he smiles an acquiescent smile.

"I *have* had such triumphs lately!" the lady goes on. "If you had seen the way in which I was *fêted* the other day at Ramsgate when I went down to play with the —th! It spoils one for anything smaller playing with them, you know. Still we are such excellent friends—are we not?—that I shall be only glad to do my best to make your theatricals a shining success."

"Miss Cumberland is here, you know," he answers, striving

to avert the full weight of patronage which she is pressing down upon him.

In spite of herself—in spite of her own firmly-established belief in her own capabilities—Mrs. Percivall-Rowe is disagreeably surprised at hearing that Miss Cumberland already is in the field. Recovering herself, she replies,—

"You said something about Allicourt; do you mean the *Morning Watch's* dramatic critic?"

Mr. Dashwood indicates that he does refer to that potent and popular person, and before he can go on to explain that Mr. Allicourt is at this moment his guest, the lady says:—

"I wish, as he is a friend of yours, that you would get him to put in something about me in the *Morning Watch*. I've heard that he heard me in *Erin*, and that he declared my declamation of the piece was finer than any living actress's. He compared me to Rachel, and—well, I hardly like to tell you all he *did* say, only I want you to understand that he, an acknowledged judge, has given such a verdict in my favour as must quash all adverse opinions."

"Good!" Dashwood says admiringly; "he is staying here now, and he'll have an opportunity of doing you further justice; he doesn't realise what you are in tragedy, yet; let him hear *My Bill* to-night."

"Is he here? I'll subjugate him," she says, laughing as she retires to dress for dinner.

Dinner has been announced for at least ten minutes, and the assembled guests are beginning to feel hungrily vexed with Mrs. Dashwood for not issuing her marching orders. Miss Cumberland, radiant in pale cream-coloured silk, with soft lace billowing about her arms and neck, is seated, languidly receiving the adoration of a special *coterie*, who look upon her as the one sole exponent of histrionic art left upon the modern stage. Miss Cumberland is a beautiful woman, endowed by nature with an aristocratic physique, and by herself with an aristocratic name. Painstaking, persevering, ambitious, and clever, she has pressed forward in an upward direction, and has the satisfaction of knowing that it is openly said, and largely believed, that she owes her present position quite as much to herself as to her admirers, quite as much to her "art" as to her "artifice." It is nothing to her that Mrs. Percivall-Rowe is ready to clutch her professional laurels from her. Miss Cumberland can hold her own on any stage—excepting the social one—against any woman.

The spirits of envy, malice, and all uncharitableness retire in good-society order into the background presently, when the lady

who has booked them appears. She is in green velvet and opaque white lace.

"We're to have *Erin* to-night, and she's always characteristic and effective in costumes, even when she only recites," Mr. Dashwood whispers to Allicourt and Miss Cumberland.

"There is something daringly original and altogether out of the commonplace in the idea of doing *Erin* in green, and I like crochet lace," the lady says quietly. "I suppose she puts on the plaid when she does Mary Stuart?"

"Nothing of the sort, she arrays in thistle-down and a sprig of blasted pine for that occasion," Allicourt rejoins laughing, and Mrs. Percivall-Rowe hears the remark and resolves to remember it!

It is a fact that she is a woman of manifold attractions and versatile powers. Before this dinner, which may be looked upon as the inauguration of the Christmas festivities at Hillside, is over, she has succeeded in concentrating the attention of all present upon herself. She has achieved this desirable object by divers means, from the use of which certain estimable country ladies, who are present, assure themselves that they "would shrink with horror." For example, she has announced her intention of going to a forthcoming fancy-ball as 'Juno,' and when she is questioned as to what is supposed to be Juno's usual attire at fancy-balls, she boldly answers, "Little or nothing." She has roused Mrs. Dashwood's suspicions and Mr. Dashwood's fears by a series of satirical allusions to some exploits of the latter during his last visit to 'The wicked world.' She has galled Miss Cumberland by affecting to ignore the private position of the latter, knowing that her fair status in society is a rock on which the accomplished actress justly believes herself to be most firmly founded. She has goaded Mr. Allicourt into the determination to "slate her when he can get the chance," by asking a number of inadvertently insolent questions about a lady—a Miss Foster—to whom it is whispered Mr. Allicourt is less than kin, and more than kind.

She gives them *Erin*, remembering the days of old; and denouncing absenteeism, teetotalism, and Protestantism, with a degree of patriotic fire and force that would lead her hearers to believe her to be a genuine daughter of the Green Isle. She hears "her voices" and strikes martial attitudes that make some of her audience "wish they were at home," as Joan of Arc. She makes everybody's flesh creep about 'Her Bill,' and by the end of the evening Mr. Dashwood feels as if Siam had sent him its largest white elephant!

"Mrs. Percivall keeps one awake, doesn't she?" he says, hesitatingly to Allicourt, as they smoke their last cigar together

when all the guests are gone. And Allicourt replies with real feeling—

"She is unquestionably an eye-opener."

The theatricals at Hillside have been a great success. Mrs. Percivall has demanded the daggers as Lady Macbeth, cursed as Leah, pleaded as Portia, been smothered as Desdemona, and been love-sick as Juliet, in a way that has perplexed Allicourt, her Romeo, and made a lady who nurses a hopeful affection for him intensely uncomfortable. And rather to the surprise of the majority of her sister women no sudden destruction has come upon her.

"And still there is this fancy-ball to be got through," they say to one another; "really, Mrs. Dashwood, for the sake of the others staying in your house, you ought to find out what she is going to wear?"

"I for one positively refuse to go with Joan of Arc or Juno," one lady says, decidedly; and Allicourt shakes his head, and avers with grim humour that "some historical and mythological persons wear even less than the pair just mentioned."

"Oh, it will be all right," Dashwood puts in, with an air of conviction that is far from being genuine. "She's sure to tell me, or to consult Mrs. Dashwood."

The day of that fancy-ball dawns. The whole neighbourhood is astir, for each person who contemplates attending it is keenly anxious to know in what garb or guise his or her favourite foe will appear. Miss Foster and Miss Foster's mamma have nearly bored Mr. Allicourt out of his honourable intentions towards the younger lady by perpetually consulting him as to what she shall wear. However, having a lively remembrance of those fifty thousand solid charms of hers which will free him from the painful necessity of telling the truth occasionally in print about some of his best friends, he has passed through the ordeal like a man. He has even gone so far as to sketch her costume—which is of the Mary Stuart period—and to listen with admiration beaming in his eyes to her frequent practices of the song by which she means to make her sensation success on the eventful evening.

"I wish there had never been 'four Maries,' or that they had all 'been on the gallows tree' before that song was composed," he is injudicious enough to say to Mrs. Percivall-Rowe. And Mrs. Percivall-Rowe smiles sweetly upon him for the sentiment and laments eloquently that "men who are capable of appreciating the highest intellectual efforts should by force of cruel circumstances be compelled to seem to smile applaudingly." Alto-

gether a promising little semi-æsthetic flirtation appears to be springing up between the public critic and the lady who yearns for public criticism, and Miss Foster's little soul is in arms.

The party from Hillside is a large one. Mrs. Dashwood, whose normal condition is that of the aspen, is inducted by marital command into the costume of the Daughter of the Regiment, and ordered to deport herself accordingly. Miss Foster in coif and ruff and velvet robe, after the orthodox pattern of her royal mistress, is touching her light guitar suggestively, and informing all those who list to her lay, that, "last night there were four Maries; to-night there'll be but three." Mr. Dashwood, in "simple Lincoln green," makes a gallant appearance as James Fitz-James, alias Scotland's King. Allicourt, after a fierce battle with his own sense of absurdity, has consented to go as Rizzio. Every one is anxious to call attention to, and hear admiration expressed of, the salient points of his or her costume. Kindly hopes are expressed by each and all that some one of their respective friends may be arrayed in an undesignedly ridiculous manner. Only Mrs. Percivall-Rowe is reserved on the point of what she wears herself, and unfeignedly indifferent to the hopes and anxieties of others.

There has been somewhat of a discussion as to how they all get to the battle-field, which is three miles distant. Mr. Dashwood's stable arrangements are conducted liberally, still his carriages may be numbered; the brougham will hold four, the waggonette eight. There are still two to be cared for, and no cabs are to be had in this Arcadia. Mrs. Percivall-Rowe acts with her usual promptitude and energy.

"*You* shall drive me over in the dog-cart," she says decisively to Allicourt, "I can wrap up well; no amount of cloaks and rugs will spoil my costume."

It is in vain that the Fosters, mother and daughter, appeal to the lady against this arrangement, making the fairest show of kindly interest in her, and wildly praying her "not to risk catching cold." Mrs. Percivall-Rowe is resolved to go to the fancy-ball in the dog-cart alone with Mr. Allicourt.

"I claim the second dance and the last three," Allicourt whispers to Miss Foster as they are all loitering about before the start.

"Perhaps Mrs. Percivall-Rowe won't let you put forward your claim," she says tartly; "or she'll have made her appearance in something so *outré* or ridiculous that *I* shall feel forced to avoid her avowed escort."

"You couldn't be so unjust?" Allicourt says hastily to Miss Foster. Money is an object to him, and the girl herself has charms. But even as he speaks, Mrs. Percivall is sailing in on

them enveloped in a big cloak, and, with a prophetic shudder, they both feel she has heard their last sentences.

They are fairly started before she begins to take her revenge.

"You are a brave man to come with me; some of your narrow-minded friends will be sure to take exception to my costume."

"What is not? Not the Joan in armour?" he asks in alarm, and she laughs and tells him,—

"No, something much simpler."

"What?" he asks in desperation, for they are near the battle-field; time is very short.

"I have striven to carry out Moore's conception of the lady who, in reliance on 'Erin's honour and Erin's pride,' strayed through Ireland arrayed in a ring, and a wand, and a 'smile,'" she said gravely, as they pulled up at the Assembly-Room door.

* * * * * *

Mr. Allicourt did not appear at the fancy ball after all. But Mrs. Percivall-Rowe carried all before her this night by the gravely graceful way in which she wore the garb, and played the part, of a Sister of Charity. For some reason or other, from this time forth, whatever bitter thing he might find to say against her, the powerful dramatic critic never hinted that the distinguished amateur could not act!

En Passant.

MR. HORNE relates an interesting anecdote as to Mr. Phelps. "Having," he says, "proposed a reconstruction of *The Duchess of Malfi*, to effect which the interpolation of several new scenes was absolutely necessary, I had an interview with Mr. Phelps on the subject. My design was accepted, and a few weeks afterwards the manuscript was forwarded to him. When we next met he addressed me in his habitually grave and saturnine manner: 'Mr. Horne, I need not tell you that we have here only local audiences for the most part, and Islington is not a large place. The greatest possible success here would by no means be of such value to you, as a dramatist, as if this tragedy were brought out at Drury Lane. Mr. —— has now got Drury Lane, and it is only right that I should say you had better make him the first offer. If he does not produce it, I will.' Thanking him for this frank and generous advice, I made known my business by a preliminary note to the then manager of 'Old Drury,' and was admitted to an audience. Mr. —— received me in his 'throne-room,' standing upon a rich hearthrug, with his back to a blazing fire, having taken an attitude and air partaking of a great *tambour major* in *mufti* and a lofty auctioneer. I began to explain what I had done. 'Sir,' said he, abruptly and pompously, 'its production upon the stage is impracticable. I know the tragedy very well, and it can't be done—quite impracticable.' 'But,' interposed the daring culprit, as I seemed to be, 'you have not *seen* it,' meaning my reconstruction. Without noticing that idle remark, he continued, 'I know the tragedy perfectly well, and it is impracticable. Nothing can be done with it or for it.' And more to the same purpose. The manuscript was accordingly returned to Mr. Phelps." The tragedy was produced at Sadler's Wells with great success.

ON the last Sunday in November, Mr. Thomas Thorne entertained a few friends on the occasion of his birthday. Mr. Toole was invited, but it unfortunately happened that that genial comedian had to play at Edinburgh on the previous night, and could not get the performance over in time to catch the train. During the evening Mrs. Thorne drew her husband aside, and, with a look of alarm in her face, told him that a man—apparently a follower of one of the servants—was drunk and creating a disturbance downstairs. Mr. Thorne's self-possession and courage did not desert him in this trying and unlooked-for emergency. "Say nothing," he said, "or you'll disturb the company; leave him to me." And soon afterwards he went downstairs. In the kitchen, lying with his face downwards and muttering incoherent threats against everybody, was a dirty

shabby man with grizzly whiskers and moustache. Mr. Thorne, cigar in hand, stood for a few moments at the door in half sorrowful contemplation of his unwelcome visitor. "The drunken rascal," he said, emitting a cloud of smoke from his lips; "a clear case of D. T. Now then, get out of this." "Shan't" mumbled the man. Then a policeman was fetched, but as he was about to do his duty the supposed drunkard proved to be Mr. Toole. He had contrived to catch the train in his stage dress, and, in collusion with Mrs. Thorne, who wished to have her revenge for a harmless joke indulged in at her expense by Mr. Thorne, had been smuggled into the house. The lady played her part as well as he did his.

A GRAND opera, "Drot og Marsk" ("King and Marshal") words by Richardt, music by Heise, has been produced at the Theatre Royal, Copenhagen, with great success. The plot is founded on the story of King Ehrich Christoffersen, called also Erich Glipping, who dispatched Marshal Stig to carry on the war against Sweden, and, during his absence, dishonoured his wife. In consequence of this disgraceful act, the nobility and clergy entered into a conspiracy against the royal criminal, who, in the year 1286, was murdered in a barn in the village of Finderup. The music is written after the Wagnerian model.

MR. HOLLINGSHEAD was recently the victim of a wicked practical joke. Some of the windows of his theatre are very near those of the *Morning Post* office. Two members of the staff of that paper saw a brace of pheasants hanging in his room, and by means of a long stick contrived to obtain possession of them. They then sent the birds to the manager, asking him to accept the gift of game, and saying that if he had a box to spare they would be very pleased to occupy it. Mr. Hollingshead, much gratified by the present, promptly complied with their request.

THIS is how a Boston paper criticises Wilhelmj: "After deeply impressing the audience by his very personal presence, his simple, unaffected dignity, his gigantic frame and towering stature, his majestic Websterian head, with the nose, and deepset eyes of Webster, but the square forehead, mouth, and chin of Beethoven. his grave and unsmiling, yet not unkindly, courtesy, and with all this grand self-poise and reserve in a man of thirty-three, the florid glow of youthful health in his complexion, and the gleam of youthful fire in his eye—after having won the cordial liking of his audience with this manly beauty, he proceeded to win its respect and unbounded admiration for his playing, and before the concert was done the enthusiasm had reached that pitch where men stand up and shout blindly through whirlwinds of applause, regardless of appearances."

WHY did Mr. Montague never marry? Miss Olive Logan undertakes to answer the question. He loved and was loved by a young English lady of high birth. The idea of formally asking her hand of her parents would be madness, and it was arranged that he should return to London from America, and then take her with him to the "Land of the free." One day, at a country house, when a large company had gathered in the drawing-

room waiting to go in to dinner, an officer of the Coldstream Guards, who had arrived from London in the afternoon, told the party he had heard at the clubs the night before that young Montague—"who used to play the lovers at the Prince of Wales', you know"—was dead. "A blanched cheek, a low moan, a girl fainting in the arms of the hostess, who entered the door just in time to catch her before she fell, told the story of love and hope deferred, now never more to be regained."

HERE is another proof that the gift of prophecy is rare among theatrical managers. The *Grâce de Dieu*, lately revived with signal success, was put on the stage only because time was wanted to prepare *Les Pontons*, by M. Sue and M. Dinaux. The imposing costume which M. Gouget wears was not seen until the fifteenth performance, prior to which he had to content himself with an ill-fitting dress taken from the wardrobe.

MADAME MODJESKA made her début at the California Theatre a year and a half ago, and achieved some degree of popularity. She afterward made a tour of eastern cities, and, thanks to a clever manager, was everywhere flattered with large audiences. This year she repeats the circuit, but has less success and more criticism. Nothing quite suits. Everything is a little off colour. Her Camille is declared to be far inferior to that of Matilda Heron and Clara Morris. Her Adrienne Lecouvreur wants strength. Her Juliet is declared to be a "radical mistake."

THE full-dress drama in New York, as a paper of that city says, has seen its best days. Mr. Daly was its prophet and Miss Fanny Davenport its model artist. This accomplished lady is quick to scent the impending downfall of the adulterous drama, and in *Olivia* has given us something deeper and more real than the exquisite fripperies of a bazaar. The true lovers of the drama may well exclaim, "For this relief much thanks." The dramatic critic is to be specially congratulated. He need no longer "cram" in order to make facile use of the jargon of the fashion-writer. His criticisms, formerly two-thirds dress-descriptions, may now occupy legitimate ground.

EVERYBODY will concede that the *Sun* is one of the most enterprising newspapers of New York. That fact was more than confirmed by the following exclusive bit of thrilling news in a recent issue:—"Miss Geneviève Ward went up the Hudson in the Plymouth Rock yesterday. As she crossed the gangway the band played 'Sweet Geneviève.'" This agreeable and startling piece of information, as another journalist says, "conveys to the universal mind a beautiful picture. In the foreground, Miss Ward picks her way daintily across the dirty gang-plank of the boat, and is welcomed by an eager group. The sublime music of the band echoes her name with honeyed intonation. In the background the joyous excursionists stare at her with embarrassing curiosity, while the *Sun* cheers the less fortunate portion of humanity with its brief but radiant intelligence of an event of vast importance to the world at large."

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

ABOUT this time last year we took occasion to point out our inability to agree with those who hold that pantomime is dying out, and to controvert the argument that because new entertainments other than pantomimes are nowadays produced at the theatres at Christmastide, the performance specially associated with Boxing-night is going out of fashion. It is true now as then that three-fourths of the theatres—and a still larger proportion of those at the West-end of London—have deliberately ignored the almanac. But it is equally true that pantomime, which has in these days to be given on an elaborate scale or not at all, bids fair to lose none of its popularity wherever it is found. The plant is not indigenous to our soil, and harlequin is not, as we know, a character of English origin, though his brother the clown is essentially British in his present type. But the growth seems, nevertheless, to be thoroughly hardy, and there are few marks of a decaying vitality in this healthy and simple-minded form of entertainment. Even burlesque, extravaganza, and opera-bouffe, which a short time since were supposed to be breathing their last, are dying hard, and when the time comes for clown to crack his last joke and for his spangled friend to give the last wave of his wand—if indeed that time should ever come—we may be sure that pantomime will die harder still.

Much of the preservation of pantomime in the form which we have been accustomed to associate with it for years past is due to that master of the art of pantomime-writing, Mr. E. L. Blanchard. For over a score of years has Mr. Blanchard provided the famous Drury Lane Annual, and mindful of the original subordination of what is termed the "opening" to the harlequinade which follows the gorgeous transformation, he is always content to tell a simple nursery legend in the simplest manner consistent with stage-form and dramatic freshness. Never pretentious, never vulgar, never inconsequent and silly, Mr. Blanchard's dramatized fairy-tales are written as though the playwright had a respect for his subject, and are models of what such efforts should achieve. This year as last, and, as we hope, for many years yet to come, Mr. Blanchard and the Drury Lane management will together fulfil their innocent mission; and as the story chosen is *Cinderella, or Harlequin and the Fairy Slipper*, the prettiest ever told in the nursery, whilst the performers are those really artistic pantomimists the Vokeses, the Annual for 1878–9 should at least equal the popularity of its predecessors. It will, however, have in *Jack and the Bean Stalk*, at Covent Garden, a worthier and more dangerous rival than it has had since the days when the late Mr. Harris was alive. The new management of Messrs. Gatti has in various ways proved itself energetic, judiciously liberal, and fully determined to do well whatever it attempts. We may be sure that Jack will at any rate not be starved, and with an

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Sir Percy Wagstaff ... ... Mr A. DENISON
Joskyns Tubbs ... ... Mr H. ASTLEY
Brisket ... ... Mr J. FRANCIS
1st Waiter Mr RIDLEY 2nd Waiter Mr GEORGE
Harry Greenlanes ... ... Mr AUGUSTUS HARRIS
Lady Wagstaff ... ... Miss FANNY JOSEPHS
Sophia Miss ROSE SAKER Mrs Joskyns Tubbs Miss M. DAVIS
Rebecca Miss E. VINING Miss Barron Miss EDITH BRUCE

Acts 1 & 3
SIR PERCY WAGSTAFF'S DRAWING-ROOM.
Act 2. - CREMORNE.

To conclude with the New Pantomime, Harlequin

ALI BABA
AND
THE FORTY THIEVES.

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CHARACTERS.

Moonbeam ... (Wizard of Sleep) ... Miss M. ROSE
Zeluea, Morgiana } ... (her Satelite) (afterwards Morgiana) } Miss KATE NEVILLE
Ali Baba ... (a Poor Woodcutter) ... Mr PERREN
Cassim Baba ... (a Rich Merchant) ... Mr F. ARTELLI
Stickenphast ... ... (a Cobbler) ... Mr JAMES
Ganem, Ghuzni } ... (Two sons of Ali) } Miss ADA VINETTA, Miss JENNIE LANGRIDGE

The Forty Thieves.

Abdallah { Captain of the Forty Thieves, Registered Proprietor of Open Sesame } Miss A. PELHAM
Hasserac (Second in Command—a bad lot) Mr WILL SIMPSON
Alcho ... (Third in Command) ... Miss A. ROSENBERG
Rigo and Migo ... (Spiritualistic Organists)
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Registered.

Cajia Baba (Ali's Better and Bigger-half) Mr FRED LAWRENCE
Zaidee { Officiating in the same capacity for Cassim } Miss METELLA
Thieves, Servants, Sleep Spirits, &c. Gnomes of the Caves.

Scene 1.—THE ABODE OF SLEEP.

Hasserac receives a rise in life—The Story begins.

Scene 2.—A Rocky Mountain Pass

The Wood Cutters in trouble—

Arrival of the FORTY THIEVES.

Scene 3.—Near Ali Baba's House.

The welcome home—The treasure and the measure—Cassim smells a rat—The explanation.

Sc. 4—The Hills overlooking the Cave.

Cassim falls in with two doubtful friends.

Scene 5.—THE MAGIC CAVE.

The golden stores—Cassim in his glory—The dream dispelled—Quarter time.

GRAND FESTIVAL OF GNOMES AND FURIES!

FIRE AND WATER BALLET.

Principal Fury ... ... Miss M. ROSE

Scene 6.—A STREET IN BAGDAD

The Cobbler and his task—The Oil Merchant—Brannagan's Band play a new tune.

Sc. 7—The GARDEN of Ali's House

THE FORTY JARS OF OIL.

Morgiana's trick — Oh my! we're boiled!

Scene 8,-Cassim's Former Residence.

The Merchant discovered—Terrific Combat!—Appearance of Moonbeam.

Scene 9.—ICEBERGS on the COAST.

Scene 10—

GRAND TRANSFORMATION SCENE—

HOME OF THE LILIES.

(Mr. RICHARD DOUGLASS).

Clown ... Mr FRED AUSTIN Pantaloon ... Mr LAWRENCE
Harlequin ... Mr F. ARTELLI Columbine...Miss RICHARDS
Harlequin, a la Watteau ... Miss JENNIE LANGRIDGE

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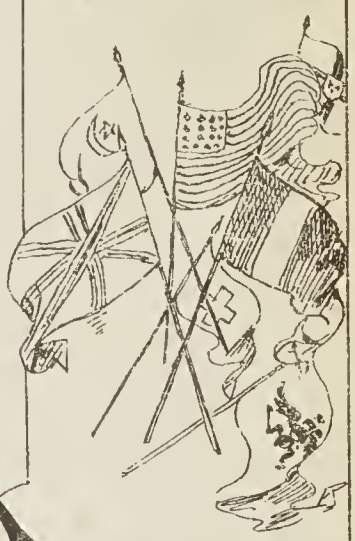
Stage Manager ... ... Mr. GEORGE BYRNE
Musical Director ... ... Mr JOHN BARNARD



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excellent representative strongly supported he may safely be promised a prosperous career. At the Princess's, where we are to have *It Is Never Too Late to Mend* once more; and at the Adelphi, where no change of programme is found necessary, pantomime will not this year have a place; but *en revanche, Jack the Giant Killer,* an old-fashioned pantomime by Mr. H. J. Byron, is cast for morning performance by a singularly effective company, which includes clever Miss Jenny Hill, little Miss Gilchrist, whose share in the children's pantomime at the Adelphi has not been forgotten, Messrs. Squire and Elton, and the D'Auban ballet-troupe. At the Aquarium, too, mimics of undoubted skill are engaged for *Aladdin,* which will be represented by Miss Kate Phillips, Mr. Paul Martinelli, Mr. Collette, and Mr. Fawn amongst others. The more fashionable theatres will as usual be hard run by some of their outlying rivals, for Mrs. S. Lane is sure to make *The Magic Mule*—which is from a French source—worthy of its predecessors at the huge Britannia, whilst Mr. W. Holland means to out-do himself at the Surrey with *The House that Jack Built,* written for him by the lively pen of Mr. Joseph Mackay. At the Marylebone another *Jack the Giant Killer* is to be given, and of course Mr. Conquest with the portentous *Hokee-Pokee, or Fiend of Fungus Forest* will produce at the Grecian one of his unique pieces of weird devilry. Altogether, therefore, we are justified in saying that whilst those who care nothing for pantomime will not this Christmas be shut out from playgoing, there will be plenty of entertainment of the old-fashioned kind for those who like it in its season either for themselves or for their children.

In two of the most important productions of a month which has not upon the whole been specially interesting to frequenters of first nights, Mr. James Albery has been concerned as author. He was part author of *No.* 20, *or the Bastille of Calvados,* and adapter of M. Emile Augier's *Les Fourchambault.* With his English coadjutor in the original play he has decidedly failed; with the material provided for him by the French dramatist he has attained something more than a partial success. The drama written by him and Mr. Joseph Hatton for the Princess's may be dismissed with the remark that it is deficient in sound dramatic motive. A quantity of old material—a murder, an unjust imprisonment, a thrilling escape, and a duel to the death—is thrown together in the hope that out of them will come a strong melodrama of sensational interest. But the art by which Mr. Dion Boucicault and the French authors whom he imitates keep their central chord of sympathetic interest intact, from first to last, is missing. At critical moments the motive of the play breaks down; and, to use a simile appropriate to the season, the drama falls to pieces like a plum-pudding boiled without string round the cloth. Messrs. Charles Warner and Barnes, and Miss Emily Fowler, did their best for it, but their best would not turn *No.* 20 into a success.

Mr. Albery's other effort, the treatment of an essentially French and very didactic comedy after the manner needed to make it acceptable to an English audience, was of a very different order, demanding as it did more literary power and more dramatic tact

if it required less imagination. The story of *Les Fourchambault* is by this time tolerably familiar, since M. Augier's comedy was one of the hits of last season at the Français, thanks in no small measure to the admirable acting of Mdlles. Croizette and Agar and Mdlles. Coquelin and Got. Mr. Albery has not departed more than was absolutely necessary from the original plot, though in condensing two acts into one he fell into the egregious mistake—since, we believe, corrected—of causing a painful plot to be developed in a needlessly brutal and offensive manner. The great lack of the motive of *The Crisis*, as the Haymarket comedy is called, is the absence of any sufficient excuse for the hideous charge of undue intimacy brought against young Denham and his father's American guest, Miss Burnside. The suspicion seems preposterous and utterly unjustifiable, so that its easy removal fails to excite the interest demanded for so important a "crisis" in the family of the Denhams. The other phase of the plot, Mrs. Goring's unselfish conduct in inducing her illegitimate son to save the ruined fortunes of the man who abandoned her years ago, comes out much more happily. The dramatic weight of the scenes between mother and son, as played by Miss L. Moodie and Mr. Charles Kelly, is thoroughly impressive; and the second act of the play, in which stern John Goring learns from his mother the extent of the sacrifice which she demands of him, would alone suffice to make *The Crisis* a welcome contribution to the drama of the day. Apart from the acting of Miss Moodie, which attains a high level of self-contained yet deepest pathos, *The Crisis* is for the most part adequately represented. Mrs. John Wood gives all imaginable point to some bright dialogue which is not always in the best possible taste: Mr. Terriss contributes an effective sketch of the young man of the day, *dégagé* in manner, selfish at heart, open to good impulses and capable of generous actions, which he does not perform unless under compulsion. Miss Burnside has a pleasant representative in Miss Eastlake, Mr. Howe makes a suitable city merchant, and Miss Lucy Buckstone with Mr. D. Fisher, junior, are also included in the cast. Mr. Albery's dialogue is generally worth listening to, and in *The Crisis*, both where it is founded upon M. Augier and where it is original, it is full of force and wit.

Mr. C. H. Ross, whose vein of fun has hitherto been known chiefly from his contributions to the comic journal of which he is editor, has now become a recruit to the small army of burlesque-writers for the stage. His new play at the Strand, *The Desperate Adventures of the Baby; or, a Wandering Heir*, is a decided relief in its freshness and high spirits, after some of the recent productions of dramatists who have worn themselves out in their vain efforts to steal from the French without spoiling their stolen goods. *The Baby* is full of jokes, some good and some very bad; its story is laughable, if not conceived in the true spirit of extravaganza, and its fitness for its purpose is best proved by the material which it affords for thoroughly comic acting on the part of its leading representatives. Thus, M. Marius has rarely been better suited with a part than he is in the Rajar Real Jam, an Oriental dignitary, whose impulsive passions only just cross the

The Crisis

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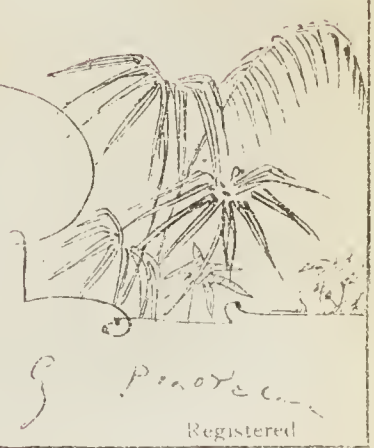

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At 8.30, a New Comedy, in Four Acts, adapted from "LES FOURCHAMBAULT," of EMILE AUGIER, entitled

THE CRISIS.

BY

JAMES ALBERY.

Mr Denham ...	(a Merchant) ..	Mr HOWE
Fawley Denham	(his Son)	Mr W. TERRISS
Lord Wm. Whitehead	(a Radical)	Mr D. FISHER, Jun.
John Goring	(a Merchant)	Mr CHAS. KELLY
Grandison ...	(Denham's Servant)	Mr WEATHERSBY
Freeman ...	(Gorings' Servant)	Mr G. FIELDER
Mrs Denham ...	...	Mrs JOHN WOOD
Blanche Denham	(her Daughter)	Miss L. BUCKSTONE
Mrs Goring ...		Miss LOUISE MOODIE
Haidee Burnside	(an American)	Miss EASTLAKE

Acts 1 & 3. - MR. DENHAM'S HOUSE.
Acts 2 & 4. - MR. GORING'S HOUSE.

TIME - PRESENT.

SCENERY BY THOMAS W. HALL.

The Audience are respectfully requested not to leave their seats until the fall of the curtain.

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VALSE	"Les Sirènes"	*Waldteufel*

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THE HENWITCHERS

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Focus	Mr WEATHERSBY
Mrs Henwitcher ..	Miss EMILY THORNE
Mrs Jenkinson	Miss JULIA ROSELLE
Polly	Miss E. HARRISON

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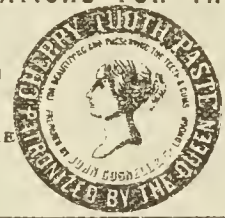

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line which separates the sublime from the ridiculous. The energetic and earnest young actor, admirably made up to suggest an Eastern nobleman, cleverly suggests a skit upon some of the mannerisms of Signor Salvini in *Othello;* his song, "Real Jam" is delivered with irresistible fervour, and his whole impersonation is instinct with life. Miss Violet Cameron, as an ultra-romantic young widow, plays with charming sincerity, and sings in such a manner as to prove herself —if further proof were needed—a great acquisition, and Miss Lottie Venne, as Baby's Norman nurse, makes a great deal out of very little. Her clever reading of a very commonplace ditty, which suggests the music-hall, is deservedly one of the most successful features of the performance.

Amongst the representations which have concluded the "legitimate" season at Drury Lane Theatre are those of *Cymbeline* for Miss Wallis's benefit, and *The Merchant of Venice* for that of Mr. Charles Dillon. In the former the only important features were the intelligent and refined Imogen of Miss Wallis, whose obvious artifice is, however, still sadly against her, and the Leonatus Postumus of Mr. Edward Compton. In *The Merchant of Venice* Mrs. Hermann Vezin's Portia, womanly and eloquent, tender and true, stood out like a revelation of the possibilities of the play. When shall we see a Shylock worthy of appearing in the trial-scene by the side of a Portia like Mrs. Vezin's, or Miss Ellen Terry's? Mr. Bandmann's appearance for a week as Hamlet was probably a test-experiment, induced by certain recent events in the law-courts. It, like the rest of the representation of the tragedy, had not very much artistic value; but if the temper of the house on the first night was to be taken as a fair sample of that of the general public, it would seem that the actor has not been injured in reputation by his quarrel with Mrs. Rousby.

IN THE PROVINCES.

In the last week of November, Mr. Irving fulfilled an engagement at Sheffield. "In some of his characters," says the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph,* "Mr. Irving's representation comes nearer to the perfection of reality than that of any other tragedian on the boards. Where he is most successful he is most unlike those who have gone before him. Undoubtedly his work is that of the student as well as the artist, and it is in the faultless combination of the two that Mr. Irving is able to place before the public an interpretation which is not only novel in its leading features, but, curiously enough, gains on the popular favour by the omission of what had come to be regarded as popular 'points.' Those who, like us, have seen Kean as Louis XI. will scarcely be prepared for Mr. Irving's interpretation, which, like everything else he does, startles us at first by its reversal of nearly all recognised conceptions of the character. This may be taken as about the truest tribute that can be paid to the freshness of the impersonation. If we see not the boldly-drawn Louis XI, of Kean, we have a character more delicately outlined—perfect even to what appears the most trifling detail—and there are brought out with indescribable skill and marvellous success, not

only the cunning and cruelty, but the cynical humour of the king. The alternations of tone, the sudden 'speaking' gestures, the keen, searching, ever watchful eyes, the use and misuse of sentiment, the affectation of piety, the unspeakable hypocrisy, the strength and the weakness of the king, are all presented to us with a vividness and power which must be seen to be realised. Many years ago we saw Kean in the last scene, and *his* 'death' is to this day a vivid memory. Mr. Irving's personation is more detailed, and, we think, more terrible in its intense realism." "His make-up," says the *Independent*, "was wonderful. The gaunt, hard, keen features, the tottering limbs, the feeble gait, the querulous whine, all were in character. The conception of the actor appears to be accurate almost to a fault, and Mr. Irving's power of conveying his conception to his audience is too well known to need emphasis. In his abject supplication to the Monk, in whose miraculous power to confer a boon such as was received by Faust the king implicitly believes, he presented a grandly artistic picture. In no part of this play does Mr. Irving make such a sensation as in the play scene in *Hamlet*, but the same powerful expression, careful attention to nature, and wealth of idea in detail could be perceived. On the whole, this character may be safely pronounced to be one of Mr. Irving's greatest successes." "*Hamlet*," says the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, "presents one of the most difficult ideals in the whole range of dramatic literature. There is no equivalent for such a character in daily life, no flesh and blood to study. Every attribute of *Hamlet* has to be drawn from the imagination, and the intellect receives no assistance save such as can be gained from the traditions of the modern drama. Mr. Irving is the actor of all others who has popularised the Shaksperian drama, in recent years, and who at the same time has popularised himself to an extent beyond mere ephemeral fame. Since Charles Kean threw down the mantle, probably no actor has been more successful than Mr. Irving, not only in a material, but in an artistic sense, albeit he labours under characteristic mannerisms far beyond those of many players of inferior calibre. Both the Keans and Macready made their way to the front rank in spite of inherent defects which made it easy to hold them up to popular jests. The chronic hoarseness of the elder Kean no doubt militated seriously against the elocutionary effect of his interpretations, but his splendid passion called forth the brilliant figure from Coleridge that to see his acting was like reading Shakspere by flashes of lightning. Macready, though always impressive and grand, may be credited with a large share of the responsibility for the existence of that numerous school of heavy tragedians who emphasise their r's to treble power, and make their final syllables ring and re-echo into ridiculous results. 'To-er be-er, or-re nott-er be,' was the kind of declamation to which the great artist's auditors were often treated. Charles Kean, in addition to the misfortune of having a great father, which led him to say that his eminent parent was the greatest enemy of his life, laboured under the peculiar disadvantage of a kind of continuous catarrh, which gave rise to a soliloquy of this complexion: 'To be, or dot to be; ch'dat is the queschdion,' and caused him to refer

to his wife in private converse as 'Elled Kead.' The peculiarities of Mr. Irving, then, may be condoned when he gives us a rendering æsthetically and intellectually perfect. Indeed the chief indictment against his *Hamlet* upon the memorable Saturday night when he suddenly leaped from melodrama and comedy to tragedy was that it 'smelt of the midnight oil'—in other words, that it was too much the hero of the independent student, and too little that of the accepted delineators. Time has toned down the edge of that complaint, and taught the critics to place another model upon the already crowded shelf. In spite of the wind and wet, there was not a vacant seat in the Theatre last night when the famous player was to repeat the impersonation with which he charmed Sheffield audiences twelve months ago. It is one of the most cheering concomitants of theatrical diversion to see a crowded 'house,' eager and attentive, bending forward in perfect stillness to catch the accents of the performers. This is what the patrons of the play did last evening from the very moment of the rising of the act-drop to the fall of the heavy green baize curtain. The entire building as far as the footlights glistened with faces, and when the occasion came, as it very often did, for a demonstration of hands and feet, the unanimity and heartiness were irresistibly impressive as a mere spectacle." Mr. Irving commenced his engagement at Birmingham on the 2nd December as Louis XI. The *Daily Gazette*, the *Daily Post*, and the *Mail* unite in bestowing high praise upon the performance. "As portrayed by the wonderful skill of Mr. Irving," says the critic of the last-mentioned paper, "this revolting character becomes picturesque even in the monotonous gloom of its unutterable malignancy and meanness. Nothing on the stage within our experience is equal in its way to the abject death of Louis as rendered by Mr. Irving. Equally impressive is the scene in which Nemours threatens him with a dagger. Realism throughout is one of Mr. Irving's great aims and the cause of a large measure of his success. His very looks contribute to the completeness of the illusion in which he holds us. His features lend themselves admirably to the portrayal of age, and his physique enhances the weakness which he has to express in the latter part of the play. But, apart from these natural qualities, we have throughout the whole performance an infinite expenditure of thought and study. The materials upon which Mr. Irving has to work, and his conscientious method of working, force into prominence the improbability of the character as a whole; yet if we take it piecemeal, and from his own point of view, there is little which can be fairly called exaggeration beyond the legitimate range of art. It is full of touches of exquisite delicacy and studious observation, and although the central pivot around which all the interest of the piece hinges is one of unqualified wickedness, relieved only by a caustic humour that darkens while it relieves, so supreme is the actor's command over his resources that even this unbroken strain of villany holds us transfixed with delight, and elicits our admiration even when it repels our sympathy. Painful as the picture is, the power of the artist conquers our repugnance, and everyone who cares for a great intellectual treat by the greatest actor of this generation, should see for

themselves the querulous, vindictive, hypocritical, and cunning old sinner whom he has galvanised into life from the dry bones of an historical caricature." The *Daily Post*, speaking of Mr. Irving's *Hamlet*, says: "It is an original and careful study of the character, after all the various theories had been considered, and has been further heightened by a profound analysis of the motives and surroundings, and by a more skilful realisation of the subtler phases of the troubled mind than any other actor has attained. The smallest lights and shades of the complex character of the philosophic Prince in all his trials of filial love, tender sympathy, and thirst for revenge under the terrible supernatural revelation of his father's death, have been worked out by Mr. Irving into a marvellously real personation, with all the graces of consummate art. So perfectly are all the minor touches given that it is only after many observations that the perfect art is discovered, being so carefully concealed. The effect is really wonderful, and over and over again the large audience was stilled to breathless silence by the intense reality of the scenes. Every movement, every gesture, every tone were so perfectly harmonised that the great drama was presented with a finish, harmony, and completeness rarely, if ever, surpassed." Mr. Irving's tour ended with an engagement at Bristol. "Three or four men who are popular at the present day," says the *Western Press*, "could be mentioned as being professors of elocution rather than actors in the strict sense of the word. They have splendid voices, they can deliver blank verse with vigour and effect, and some of them do not lack dignity of bearing. But these powers, though very well in their way, are of very secondary importance when the object desired is the presentation of a character that has been the admiration and study of generations. It is impossible to see and hear these actors without pleasure, but their delineation of the character they are supposed to portray is so rough and exaggerated that in the most important particular they fail. Mr. Irving's art is distinctly higher in kind from its aim being the interpretation of character rather than elocutionary display. We are not blind to Mr. Irving's defects, but such an assumption as that of Hamlet at the New Theatre last evening shows him to be infinitely superior to all contemporaries. The grand ability of the conception and execution was testified to by long-continued cheering."

There are but few other events of interest to record. Mr. and Mrs. Kendal continued their tour with *Diplomacy*, and found time to give readings at the Association Hall, Manchester, for a charitable purpose. "I feel," Mrs. Kendal said in the course of an address to the audience, "that there are many people in this Hall who would not come to the theatre to see me there. Well, I want to ask you why you won't come to see me there? Is it because it is called a theatre, or is it because you think I shall have my face painted? You know you need not go to a theatre to see ladies with painted faces. They could do that in the parks and streets of your city; but the only difference is, we seem to put on the paint properly, and they don't. Now, you must not allow yourselves to be led away by all the things you hear said against the theatre. I feel very sad

when I take up the papers and see the things said about my noble profession. I cannot understand how you intelligent people can really believe them. Of course there is bad in every class, but you must not believe all that is said against them. I am sure there is nothing objectionable in seeing my friend Miss Pattison on the stage, and I am sure Mr. Kendal is very nice to look at. Don't, then, let yourselves be led away by people who say things they know nothing about. I want you to judge for yourselves, and if you find anything reprehensible stop away, but don't run down people who are striving hard to do their duty."

Mr. Toole, Miss Bateman, and other well-known players were still on tour. The *Liverpool Albion*, speaking of Miss Bateman's Queen Elizabeth, says:—"To the task here undertaken she addresses herself with conscientious ardour, and her artistic feeling and executive ability enables her to fulfil every condition imposed by the exacting part. It is impossible, while looking at Miss Bateman's performance, to dismiss entirely from the mind recollections of Ristori's assumption of the character, but it must be confessed that the comparison is very far from unfavourable to the English actress." Mr. Sothern brought his tour to a close on the 7th of December at Dublin, where he faced very large audiences. He will not be seen on the stage again for six months. Mr. Chippendale, in continuation of his farewell tour, appeared at Newcastle, Edinburgh, and Sheffield; and at Modern Athens, in the course of an address to the audience, quoted the lines put into the mouth of John Kemble by Scott:—

> "As the worn war-horse, at the trumpet's sound,
> Erects his mane, and neighs, and paws the ground—
> Disdains the ease his generous lord assigns,
> And longs to rush on the embattled lines,
> So I, your plaudits ringing in mine ear,
> Can scarce sustain to think our parting near;
> To think my scenic hour for ever past,
> And that those valued plaudits are my last."

IN PARIS.

The end of November witnessed an unexpected failure at the Opéra Comique. Much was expected of *Les Noces de Fernande*, for the librettists were M. Sardou and M. de Najac, and the music had been composed by a gentleman who about two years ago won the Prix de Rome. But even if expectation had not been raised to such a height as it was, the piece could hardly have met with less decided disapprobation. The plot is almost precisely similar to that of *Le Petit Duc*, the dramatic element is extremely poor, and the music is wanting in both originality and colour. What induced the manager to produce the piece it is difficult to imagine. On the other hand, a version of *La Morte Civile*, the drama in which Signor Salvini made so deep an impression about this time last year at the Salle Ventadour, has been produced at the Odéon with considerable success. The nature of the story may be described in a few sentences. Conrad, the hero, kills a brother-in-law in a moment of bitter provocation, and is sentenced to penal servitude for life.

Procuring his release at the end of fourteen years, he goes in search of his wife and daughter, with whom he has been unable to hold any communication. He discovers that his daughter has been adopted by a physician, and believes that the latter is really her father. The wife acts as gouvernante to her child, but never avows the relationship between them. Finding both mother and daughter devoted to the physician, Conrad poisons himself in despair. In his last moments he calls faintly for his daughter. "Ah," says the mother, "he thinks you are his child; do not undeceive him, call him 'father.'" The girl obeys, and Conrad dies in attempting to embrace her. The work of adapting *La Morte Civile* to the French stage has been effectually done by M. Vitu, of the *Figaro*. M. Pujol, though unable to efface the impression made by Signor Salvini, especially in the death-scene, plays throughout with remarkable vigour and pathos, and is well supported by Madame Hélène Petit as the wife. Let us now pass to the Renaissance, where *Le Petit Duc* has at length made way for *La Camargo*, an operetta in three acts, by M. Lecocq and MM. Leterrier and Vanloo. The principal figure in the piece, as may be inferred from the title, is the famous opera dancer of the last century, who is here associated with the bandit Mandrin in a variety of more or less exciting adventures. The music, like the libretto, is animated and generally pleasing, especially in a song allotted to the Camargo. "Partout on me fête, on m'acclame," a rondo for the brigands in the second act, and an air with chorus, "Gentils Soldats," in the third act. La Camargo is charmingly played by Mdlle. Zulma-Bouffar, and the success of the operetta admits of no doubt. The same may be said of the revival at the Français of M. Dumas' *Fils Naturel*, thanks to the vigour of the play, and the force with which the parts of Clara Vignot and Jacques are represented by Madame Favart and M. Worms. The last of the new pieces we have to speak of was, like the first, an unequivocal failure. M. Corvin, who, under the *nom de plume* of Pierre Newski, collaborated with M. Dumas in *Les Danischeff*, has for some time been anxious to show that he can write a fine play without assistance, and to this end has brought out at the Ambigu Comique a piece called *La Princesse Borowska*. The heroine is a lady who, in order to be at liberty to spend her husband's money and sacrifice his honour, contrives to have him banished for murder, but eventually finds it necessary to commit suicide. The fate of the play may be recorded with the utmost clearness by saying that henceforward M. Dumas will be regarded as the sole author of *Les Danischeff*. The Vaudeville has revived M. Feuillet's *Montjoye*, M. Adolphe Dupuis succeeding Lafont as Montjoye. The impersonation is undoubtedly fine, but is without the manly dignity which the older actor conferred upon the part. Madame Chaumont has appeared at the Variétés in a sprightly "révue," and at the Nouveautés the place of *Coco* is taken by a pleasing vaudeville called *Fleur d'Orange*.

IN BERLIN.

The Royal Playhouse attained a marked success on the 14th of November by the production of a drama by Herr Karl Wartenburg, who has for many years held a respectable position amongst German

novelists, but has not hitherto made any striking contribution to dramatic literature. The scene of *Die Schauspieler des Kaisers*, as the drama is called, is laid in France in the days of Napoleon I., and the principal characters are members of the Comédie Française. Urbain Sansnom occupies the humble situation of a supernumerary and is consumed with ambition to play leading parts in tragedy—an ambition which renders him the laughing-stock of his comrades. Manon Vallier, born heiress to a noble marquis, has become an actress amidst the storms of the Revolution, and is now the first *tragédienne* of the company. Manon's brother is condemned to death for supposed complicity in a conspiracy against the Emperor, and it is arranged that his sister shall present a petition on his behalf to the Emperor after a performance of *Cinna*, a tragedy which lauds the forgiving nature of the Emperor Augustus. The leading tragic actor, who is vainly in love with Manon and supposes that the object of her petition is a rival lover, refuses on the plea of illness to play the leading part. On the spur of the moment Urbain offers to take his place, attains a magnificent success, and charms the Emperor, who pardons Manon's brother, but the excitement of his triumph proves too much for poor Urbain, who suffered from an incurable injury sustained in his boyhood, and he dies after a mutual confession of love between him and Manon. The drama is well constructed, and the principal characters are highly sympathetic. Fräulein Meyer, who has come greatly to the front this season, achieved a fresh success in the part of Manon Vallier, which she played with much natural pathos. Herr Ludwig was equally happy in his impersonation of Urbain. The drama was preceded by a "proverbe" by Herr Alfred Friedmann, entitled *Geben ist seliger denn Nehmen* (It is more blessed to give than to receive), which failed to please, owing to its affected style. At the end of the month this house revived Gottschall's comedy *Pitt und Fox*, in which the author has well hit off the characteristics of the two English statesmen, who find excellent representatives in Herren Kahle and Liedtcke, while the part of the Nabob is well played by Herr Oberlaender.

No change of performance has taken place at the Residenz or at the Wallner Theater, the *Fourchambault* continuing its prosperous career at the former, and *Doctor Klaus* at the latter. The Stadttheater has scored a success by the production of a German version of M. Gondinet's comedy *Le Panache*, under the title of *Der Herr Präfect*. At the Friedrich-Wilhelmstadt Theater, M. Lecocq's *Petit Duc* was produced on the 25th November, under the title of *Der kleine Herzog;* the *mise en scène* and costumes fell in no way short of those at the Paris Renaissance, and the performance was throughout good, the result being a decided success which promises to be a lasting one. The Belle Alliance Theatre closed its season about the middle of November with a few performances of a German version of M. Sardou's *Rabagas*, to the interpretation of which the company were quite unequal, with the exception of Herr Ottomeyer, who was fairly effective in the title part. At the National Theater, a new play entitled *Die beiden Wertheim*, by Herr E. Haydn, has met with a favourable reception; the construction of

the piece betrays the novice, but the natural dramatic instinct manifested in the work gives promise of a valuable addition to the not too numerous band of contemporary German dramatists.

IN VIENNA.

The only novelty produced at the Burgtheater during the past month was a comedy in four acts, bearing the attractive, if hazardous, title of *Rosenkranz und Güldenstern*, and being the first dramatic effort of Herr Michael Klapp, who is well known as a writer of humorous newspaper *feuilletons*, and as the author of some novels and a satirical poem. The title characters are in no way connected with Hamlet's treacherous fellow-voyagers. Baron Rosenkranz is a man of the world, to whom Prince Liebenstein entrusts the care of his son Count Ernest, during a tour in foreign parts which is to complete the young man's education. The Count is to travel *incognito*, and the Baron suggests that he should assume the name of Güldenstern—hence the title of the play. The Prince, who has arranged a marriage for his son with a high-born lady, wishes him to sow his wild oats before entering the married state, and instructs Rosenkranz to let his companion see life, but to keep him away from actresses, for the Prince has a horror of all connected with the stage, his own sister having so far forgotten herself as to marry an actor. After the first act, which is an excellent exposition of the plot, the play rather degenerates into farce, and the incidents which occur on the journey, though generally amusing, are sometimes too remote from the subject. Need we say that in the end the young Count marries, if not an actress, the daughter of an actor—of the very actor with whom his father's sister had contracted the much deplored *mésalliance?* The piece was well received, the warmth of the applause being perhaps in some measure due to the desire of the audience to learn the name of the author, whose persistence in remaining anonymous stimulated public curiosity. Repeated plaudits, however, failed to accomplish that purpose, and it was not till some days after the first performance that Herr Klapp dropped his *incognito*. The acting was unusually good all round, the very smallest parts being perfectly played. Herr Thimig, who has returned from his period of military service, attained a great success in the subordinate character of a Saxon on his travels. Herren Gabillon, Sonnenthal, and Hartmann, and Mesdames Hartmann and Janisch played the more prominent parts.

The Stadttheater has given its frequenters three novelties since we last recorded its doings. Herr Willbrandt's *Natalie* is the story of a girl who, on the eve of her marriage with a rich man whom she has accepted to save her father from ruin, finds in an old desk some letters which prove that there has been a love affair between her deceased mother and her intended husband, and consequently breaks off the marriage. The unpleasant subject is not redeemed by other merits in the piece, and Frau Willbrandt-Bandius, the author's wife, failed, with all her art, to render it acceptable. A lively comedy adapted from a French source by Herr Ludwig Held, and entitled *Hausse und Baisse*, was much more fortunate. It is not a story of

Bourse speculation, as its name might seem to indicate, but of two brothers, one an optimist and the other a pessimist, who in the end cure each other and give up extreme views. Herren Buckovics and Tyrolt contrasted the two characters very effectively. The third of the above-mentioned novelties was a German version of M. Victor Hugo's *Marion Delorme*, which met with little success. Space fails us to do more than mention the production at the Carl Theater of a German version of Messrs. Raymond and Burani's *Cabinet Piperlin*, which had a great success at the Paris Athénée Comique, but proved so unattractive here that it soon gave way to a revival of Nestroy's *Lumpacivagabundus*, an old piece of which age has not lessened the laughter-producing powers.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

In Rome, the dramatic season of the Bellotti-Bon company, No. 1, at the Valle Theatre, has been marked by the production of some important novelties. First in the list comes a new historical drama from the pen of Signor Pietro Cossa, whom his *Nerone*, *Messalina*, and *Cleopatra*, have placed in the front rank of contemporary Italian dramatists. The new work is entitled *I Borgia*, and, like the other works we have named, is written in verse. The infamous family which gives its title to the piece is represented by such prominent members as Alexander VI., Valentino, and the Duke di Gandia. The first and second acts, and the greater part of the third, are occupied with the story of the dissolution of the first marriage of Lucrezia Borgia, who is represented as an ingenuous young lady, deeply attached to her husband and strongly opposed to the contemplated divorce. In the latter part of the play, the love of the Duke di Gandia for Donna Sancia, and the rivalry between the duke and Valentino, become the centre of the interest, to the destruction of all unity of action. Valentino is the best drawn of all the characters, his cruelty, cunning, and ambition being forcibly illustrated. On the other hand, the author has failed to grasp the character of Alexander VI., who in the play does not rise above the common type of the stage tyrant. Vannozza, the mother of the Borgias, is represented as a religious reformer, and is such a monotonous personage that all the talent of Signora Virginia Marini fails to render her acceptable to the public. *I Borgia*, though defective in so many respects, contains some very fine scenes, and some passages written in a fine vein of poetry. It was very favourably received, and repeated several times. Next in the list we may name an Italian version of Barrière's *Comtesse de Sommerive*, which did not please the audience, apparently owing to the violent ending of the sad story. A new comedy by Signor Gherardi del Testa, entitled *La Vita Nuovissima*, and which may be described as more vivacious than moral, met with more favour from the public, but was severely condemned by critics who have winked at such pieces as *Bébé* and the *Dominos Roses*. Signor Rossi is giving a series of performances at the Apollo Theatre with success.

In Milan, again, we find Signor Cossa attracting attention at the Manzoni Theatre, where his *Cleopatra* was produced early in

November with unusual splendour of *mise en scène* and costumes. Signora Tessero achieved a triumphant success in the title part, and was ably supported by the other members of the Morelli company. Amongst the other novelties produced during the past month by this company, we may name *Il Testamento di Figaro*, a comedy, in which Signor F. A. Bon has had the boldness to reproduce the well-known characters of Beaumarchais with such ill effect, that noisy outbursts of disapprobation accompanied the performance; *Il Sorriso*, a comedy by Signor Montecorboli, well written and sympathetic, but marred by insufficiency of action; and *Agrippina*, a tedious five-act drama by the Neapolitan Duke Paolo di Maddaloni, which was only saved from utter failure by Signora Tessero's representation of the title character. At the Dal Verme Theatre, a new opera by Signor Parravano, with libretto by Signor Golisciani, and entitled *Ginevra di Monreale*, has been produced with considerable success; it abounds in reminiscences of other composers, but is in other respects a meritorious work. The operas announced for the coming season at La Scala, are Verdi's *Don Carlos*, Massenet's *Roi de Lahore*, Auteri's *Dolores*, and Gomes' *Maria Tudor*.

IN MADRID.

In the early days of November most of the theatres produced new pieces, with such uniform ill-success that the praisers of the past found abundant scope for dilating upon their favourite theme of the decline of the drama. Fiasco followed fiasco with dispiriting regularity for some time, and such well-known writers as Don José Echegaray, his brother Don Miguel, and Don Eusebio Blasco were amongst the vanquished. We need not cumber the short space at our disposal with the names of these failures, but will pass at once to the more successful pieces produced during the latter half of November. The first production that broke the run of ill-luck was a tragic drama in three acts and in verse, by Don José Sanchez de Castro, entitled *Theudis*, which was received with enthusiasm by the audience of the Teatro Español, its success being due to the poetic inspiration which pervades it rather than to an interesting action or a well constructed plot. The title-character is a king of the Goths, who, many years before the commencement of the action, had repudiated his wife Tuscia on ill-founded suspicions, and had disowned his infant son Enrico as the offspring of Tuscia's supposed infidelity. For some reason, not very clearly explained, Tuscia has brought up Enrico in the belief that he is the son of a knight named Teodoro, and when the latter is slain in battle by a traitor commissioned to do so by Theudis, Enrico determines to avenge his supposed father, and, after much vacillation and soliloquizing after the manner of Hamlet, mortally stabs his father, Tuscia arriving too late to prevent the deed. A very fine monologue in the first act, in which Enrico discourses on good and evil and freewill, excited great applause, though it bears too much resemblance to a well-known passage in Calderon's *La Vida es Sueño*. A splendid battle description in the second act was equally successful, and does

not give rise to any unfavourable comparisons. Señor Calvo played Enrico with great effect, and the fine passages we have mentioned lost nothing by his delivery. The other characters were all acted in a manner that left much to be desired. We may add that *Theudis* is not the first dramatic work of Señor Sanchez de Castro, who is remembered as the author of *Hermenegildo*, a fine drama produced several years ago. The anniversary of Lope de Vega's birth was celebrated on the 4th of December by a performance of his *Niña boba*.

The Teatro de Apolo, which had its share of the above-mentioned fiascos and invariably announced each of them as having been "extraordinarily applauded," has now dropped all such words of puffery from its bills, having achieved a genuine success by the production on the 28th November of a new drama in verse by Don Eugenio Sellés, entitled *El Nudo Gordiano* (The Gordian Knot), which is generally admitted to be the greatest dramatic work that has been produced in Madrid for many years. The principal characters are a magnanimous husband, a faithless wife and her lover, who is an intimate friend of the husband. The problem indicated in the title is one which Messrs. Dumas and Augier have freely discussed on the French stage, namely, what to do with a faithless wife? The husband, in the new Spanish drama, seeks a solution of the difficulty in separation, magnanimously sheltering his guilty wife from shame by pretending that the separation has taken place at her instance; but, finding that she still persists in her criminal conduct, he is at last driven in a moment of fury to cut the knot, adopting the famous counsel of M. Dumas fils: *Tue-la!* Señor Sellés has succeeded in rendering this *scabreux* theme acceptable, and his drama is worthy of high commendation on account of its clearness of exposition, elevation of thought, and excellence of literary style. Señor Vico played the deceived husband powerfully, and an *ingénue* daughter, not mentioned in our necessarily brief analysis of the plot, was a fresh success for the charming Señora Antonia Contreras, while the other parts were adequately represented.

IN NEW YORK.

The company assembled under Mr. Mapleson's banner at the Academy of Music are enjoying all the success that could have been anticipated. Madame Gerster, who appeared about the middle of November, has taken the public by storm, although the best musical critics do not write of her in terms of unqualified praise. Signor Galassi has likewise won great popularity, especially by his singing in *Rigoletto*. Madame Modjeska left the Fifth Avenue Theatre early in November, and has gone on a tour in the States. Her place was taken by Mr. Edwin Booth, who, however, did not attract large audiences. *Almost a Life*, an adaptation of one of M. Gaboriau's novels, already utilised for stage purposes in Paris this year, has been brought out at the Standard. Though it is in six acts, the interest is well sustained, and the play may be pronounced successful. Mr. Charles Leclerq's acting as a malignant

idiot was exceedingly powerful. A performance at the Bowery Theatre was interrupted on the 16th November by a dispute behind the scenes. The managers of the Union Square Theatre had enjoined Mr. Hofele from paying Miss Eytinge any money until their claim of royalty on *Rose Michel* (lately played at the Bowery) had been satisfied; the actress refused to go on unless she received her due; the manager would not fly in the face of the injunction, and she declined to appear. The audience were with the lady, who was followed to her house and cheered lustily by a large crowd.

ARTIST AND *ARTISTE.*

By Edward Compton.

"NOW, Beginners, *please!*" shouted our Call-boy one night,
And I quitted my glass in a deuce of a fright;
For I knew that *Love's Sacrifice!* I'd to commence,
And "Beginner" I was in a duplicate sense.

Having done my first scene (a gay "ruffler" I played),
I rushed back to my numerous mixtures for aid,
And was quickly engrossed, as our "funny man" said,
In the copy exact of a senseless wax head!

Just then an old stager came hurrying in late,——
"I've lost my 'make up' box;—will you lend me *yours*, mate?"
I respected his talent, his worth, and his age,
And was charmed to assist him get up for the stage.

Cosmetiques, and pencils, rouge, carmine, and blue,
Powders ranging from brown to a dainty flesh hue,
Sticks of paste, foreign stuff for the eyebrows and eyes,
Puffs, brushes, gum, scissors, and shades in hair-dyes!

I spread them before him with pardonable pride,
In bewildered surprise the collection he eyed;
Then he used some carmine, a stray bit of burnt cork,
Calmly thanked me, and off to the stage 'gan to walk.

Dumbfoundered I followed,—watched his scene as "the Friar,"
Marked his ease, his distinctness, grace, spirit, and fire;
Then exclaimed, on reviewing this circumstance quaint,
"He *made up* with *fine acting* the lack of *fine paint!*

Echoes from the Green-Room.

IN consequence of the death of the Princess Alice no theatrical performance will be given at Windsor on the occasion of the Duke of Connaught's marriage.

THE name of Lord Beaconsfield must be added to the list of dramatic authors. In 1839 he wrote *Count Alarcos*, a tragedy, but never had it played. "Try me," says one of the personages, "this Cyprus wine; an English prince did give it me returning from the Holy Sepulchre."

THE Lyceum re-opens on Monday, the 30th December. The company includes Mr. Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, Mr. Chippendale, Miss Florence Terry, Mr. Forrester, Miss Kate Rivers, Mr. Harold Kyrle, Miss Pauncefort, Mr. Elwood, Mr. Teesdale, Mr. Mead, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Ferrand. Mr. Irving is about to publish his acting version of *Hamlet*, with a preface by Mr. Marshall. The play being rather Elizabethan than old Danish in spirit, Mr. Irving deems himself justified in departing from strict archæological accuracy, and the preface is written in support of this view.

MDME. ADELINA PATTI and Signor Nicolini cleared by their six performances in Brussels upwards of 60,000 francs.

THE reading-desk and gas apparatus used by Mr. Irving on the occasion of the readings he gave at Edinburgh and Glasgow for the relief of the sufferers by the Bank disaster, were the same as those used by the late Charles Dickens, whose family presented them to the actor.

THE company of the Comédie Française will give forty-two performances at the Gaiety Theatre, commencing June 2. In order to ascertain whether the enterprise would pay, Mr. Hollingshead recently opened a subscription list, and before long every available seat was taken.

DURING Mr. Irving's engagement in Bristol, the Duke of Beaufort with a party of seventeen, drove over from Badminton to see Louis XI. The house was crowded, and the Duke met with a most cordial reception from the audience.

MR. IRVING has been asked by the committee of the Perry Barr Institute, Birmingham, to be the president of that Institute for another year, and has accepted the honour.

SIGNOR SALVINI and Signor Rossi have been made officers of the order of the Crown of Italy.

MADAME NILSSON is staying at the Continental Hotel, Paris.

Mr. Phelps habitually encouraged young actors if they had genuine talents. Twenty-two years ago a young gentleman who had resolved to go on the stage was introduced to him at Sadler's Wells, and at his request recited Othello's address to the Senate. "Sir," said Mr. Phelps, "don't go on the stage; it's an ill-requited profession." The aspirant, however, was not to be diverted from his resolution. "In that case, sir," continued Mr. Phelps, "come here, and I'll give you two pounds a week to begin with." The youth thought it better to have a provincial training, but never forgot the compliment which had been paid him. His name was Henry Irving.

Mr. Phelps was an enthusiastic angler. During the theatrical vacation, Mr. Blanchard tells us, he was to be found for many successive years at the Red Lion Hotel, at Farningham, where he stayed for weeks together to fish in the Darent. A Kentish yeoman, bringing his family to town for the purpose of seeing *The Doge of Venice* at Drury Lane, and recognising a familiar voice and manner in the prominent actor, astonished the audience in the midst of the play by involuntarily exclaiming, "Blest if the Dodge isn't the old Farningham fisherman!"

The Prince of Wales lately saw *Le Petit Duc* for the sixth time at the Renaissance. Between the first and second acts, having gone under the peristyle to smoke a cigarette, he bought a photograph of Mdlle. Granier of the marchande de bouquets, and carefully placed it in his pocket-book.

Mr. Ernest Gye will undertake the management of the Royal Italian Opera.

For some unexplained reason the late Mr. Lewes took an intense delight in "worrying" Mr. Charles Kean. In writing of that admirable actor and manager he invariably steeped his pen in gall.

Mr. Lewes's experience as an amateur actor was gained in the company which Charles Dickens brought together. Robert Brough, who wrote political satires in verse for the *Leader*, used to make sport of his editor's histrionic efforts. "I would advise Lewes to go to Brighten," he remarked one evening, as the curtain fell.

M. Sardou had no doubt of the success of *Les Noces de Fernande*, which has failed. He usually becomes very anxious as the first night approaches, and during the representation walks feverishly about the theatre. It was immediately after the last rehearsal of *Les Noces de Fernande* that he started for Nice, where he passes the winter.

Mr. Byron compares a play to a cigar. If it is good, everybody wants a box; if it is bad, you may puff to the utmost of your power without being able to "draw."

Mr. Sothern made a little speech on the last night of his engagement in Liverpool. "I have," he said, "been 'dangerously ill,'—as Sir William Jenner and Professor P. A. Simpson stated in their published certificate.

I have (and I knew it) risked my life in fulfilling my engagements; but I have not, as report had it, got paralysis, softening of the kidneys, spine, or liver. The plain fact was—and is—that for twenty-six years I had overworked my brain and body. No more. Still, that's enough to reflect upon. In two weeks I retire from public life for at least six months, and wander through Italy, the Holy Land, &c. Of course, I shall do Africa, China, Japan, and America, just to keep me up in ordinary geography."

THE other evening, as M. Dumas was entering his house, an old woman timidly asked for alms, which he gave her. "Perhaps," suggested a friend, "she is an impostor." "When it is an old woman who begs," replied the dramatist, "I give without fear, for it is almost certain that she has not been fortunate enough to have a son."

THERE was an enjoyable little scene at Her Majesty's Theatre lately, during a rehearsal of *Les Huguenots*. M. Gillandi said he could not learn his part unless Madame Pappenheim "sang out" instead of "hummed." The lady declined, and the gentleman put on his hat and disappeared.

LORD DUNMORE has had the temerity to write a four-act opera, and, what is more, intends to submit it to Mr. Mapleson.

Between M. NEWSKI, of *Les Danischeff* fame, and M. Chabrillat, the manager of the Ambigu, a little coolness has sprung up. The former called his new play "Les Borowski"; the latter announced it as "La Princesse Borowska." M. Newski is very angry about it.

Le Roi l'a dit, a comic opera by M. Delibes, has been prohibited in Copenhagen on political grounds.

THE Rev. Mr. Talmage, in his sermon on what he saw at theatres, said "There were corpses everywhere; corpses in the lobby, corpses in the auditorium." It is to be feared that he had found his way into the Morgue and mistaken it for a theatre.

MR. GILBERT'S *Gretchen* is in rehearsal at the Olympic, but may not be produced for some weeks. It is in blank verse, and contains some new situations. It is said that one of the speeches assigned to Mephistopheles is exceedingly powerful.

MISS MARION TERRY goes to the Prince of Wales's Theatre next autumn for nine months.

MR. J. L. TOOLE'S provincial tour will not end until March.

MR. NEVILLE will continue to manage the Olympic Theatre after he goes to the Adelphi.

MR. BARRY SULLIVAN has been publicly entertained at Dublin and Cork.

WONDERS never cease. Before long *Our Boys* will be withdrawn, and the last nights of *Les Cloches de Corneville* in Paris are announced.

THERE was a pleasant dance party at the Cavendish Rooms on the 9th inst. It was made up of the *H.M.S. Pinafore* company and several of their friends.

Mr. Byron's *Uncle* is to be shown to us at the Gaiety.

Mr. Baillie Cochrane, M.P., is about to publish a book on the Théâtre Français under Louis XV.

Professor Storojenka, of Moscow, has brought out a treatise on the life and works of Robert Greene, the early English dramatist.

Mr. Clark, part editor of the Cambridge Shakspere, is dead.

A comedy by Mr. Sims, entitled *The Alderman*, will shortly be produced.

Lemons is in rehearsal at the Criterion.

Herr Bandmann has been acquitted of the charge of assaulting Mrs. Rousby, as was expected. By the way, the case was given in the papers as "The Queen *v.* Bandmann." Is Mrs. Rousby in reality the most exalted personage in the realm?

Miss Pattison and Mr. Mackintosh go to the Court Theatre.

Can it be true, as some Scotch papers assert, that Mr. Irving and Mr. Toole had to pay for the use of the hall in which they gave their entertainment at Glasgow?

M. Lecocq and M. Gondinet are at work upon an opéra-bouffe for the Variétés.

M. Massenet is composing a piece for the Opéra Comique, to a libretto by MM. Meilhac and Halèvy. *La Courte Echelle* has been read to the artists of the same theatre.

The Salle Ventadour is closed, and will soon be converted into a banking-house.

Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant is in rehearsal at the Porte Saint Martin, and M. Offenbach's opera, *Madame Favart*, will shortly be produced.

Ferney is in future to be called Ferney-Voltaire.

Herr Ziehrer has composed a comic opera, *König Jerome*, which will be produced this season at the Ringtheater, Vienna, and which is accepted, also, in Brussels.

Signor Salvini has organized a company at Milan for a foreign tour.

Signor Rossi is now *en tour* in Italy.

An Italian version of Ambroise Thomas's *Mignon* has just been played at the Theatre Royal, Lisbon.

Maria Dorothea Altén, the Swedish poetess, is dead. Since 1828 she had not taken up the pen. Among her tragedies is *Johan Huss*, written in 1822.

Rio Janeiro is to have an Italian opera-house.

Mr. Rignold's success in Australia has been so great that he has prolonged his engagement there, and will visit New Zealand, &c., before saying farewell to Sydney and Melbourne.

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MR. GEORGE RIGNOLD, in consequence of pressing requests to make another Tour of the United States of America and Canada, has postponed his English trip. Will proceed to Montreal, Canada, Chicago, Pittsburg, Baltimore, Washington, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, &c.

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At 10,
JINGLE.

Mr. Henry Irving; Messrs. Lyons, Collette; Miss Pauncefoot, Mrs. St. John.

ROYAL STRAND THEATRE.

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OUR BITTEREST FOE.
Messrs. Cooper, C. Murray, and Miss Telbin.
At 8.15,
ENGAGED.

Mr. George Honey, Messrs. E. Bruce, Cooper, Davy; Mesdames Telbin, Cooper, J. Stewart, H. Stewart, Louise Hibbert, &c.

ROYAL COURT THEATRE.

Lessee and Manager, Mr. HARE.
At 8,
OLIVIA.

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At 8,
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A WHIRLIGIG.
At 8,
OUR BOYS,
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A FEARFUL FOG.
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At 9,
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THE CANTERBURY.—New Ballet Sketch, entitled "Northern Stars," supported by Mdlles. Ada, Phyllis Broughton, Florence Powell, and the Canterbury Corps de Ballet—novel effect of dancing in the snow. Saturday, August 3, first night of the new fairy version of "LURLINE," entitled the "Night Dancers." Miss Nellie Power, and Mdlle. Bartoletti, of Her Majesty's Opera. The Conference Trick at 10.30. The *Era* says: "The new entertainment, The Conference, was received in the most flattering manner." Variety entertainment—Dare Brothers—The unrivalled clown and one-legged gymnast Romah, on the trapeze, and the wonderful dive of little Luien, with other attractions.

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Mr. Hermann Vezin, Messrs. A. Stirling, L. Lablache, C. Harcourt, H. Cooper, &c.; Mrs. Bandmann, Mesdames A. Stirling, Billington, D. Drummond, Kate Bentley, Kate Barry, and Bella Pateman.
SHRIMPS FOR TWO.

THE CANTERBURY THEATRE of VARIETIES. — In consequence of the remarkable success which attended the representation of "Plevna" during its run of 203 nights, the management have resolved to produce a second grand and instructive spectacle of a naval character, entitled TRAFALGAR, consisting of panoramic and dioramic views from the closing years of Nelson's career, concluding with his death on board the *Victory*; and which will be presented EVERY EVENING. The panoramic scenery painted by Mr. W. Hann. The arms and accoutrements reproduced from authentic sources. The costumes by Miss Yates. In TRAFALGAR, the incidental Spanish ballet will be danced by Mdlle. Bartoletti (from her Majesty's Opera), with corps de ballet, &c. The Moorish ballet at Gibraltar, supported by Mdlles. Ada, Phyllis Broughton, and Florence Powell.

Mr. HENRY IRVING.

(*From the* "FIFESHIRE JOURNAL," *November* 7.)

DAVID declined the use of Saul's armour because he had not proved it, and the end of that was that he became King of Israel. The young man preferred the hue of native resolution to unbroken tradition, and the first to bear the brunt of it was the enormously inched Philistine. Some modern dramatic critics have yet to learn the lesson there is for all time in David's choice, and in the reason of it. They have critical canons they would always impose without reference to individuality of character, and their good opinion, it seems, depends on how one man fills another man's hat. Hence we have all their foolish talk about mannerisms, stage struts and stagey vocables. They weigh Art in balances and Genius in scales. They don't know that Saint Luke's summer itself is made up of mannerisms, as all may see just now in the woods in the afternoon sunlight. Each fading leaf has its share in the glorious copse.

It would not diminish Goethe's grandeur a bit to know that he had a cast in his eye; nor Homer's fame—*pace* De Quincey—that he had, like Byron, a club-foot. Islamism does not visibly suffer because its founder was an epileptic; nor is the *Midsummer Night's Dream* a whit the worse because its author was a sheep-stealer. *Elijah* would remain the peerless composition it is were Mendelssohn found to have died in debt to some village grocer, and the *Messiah* is immortal even though Handel was a gross eater. Carlyle's elliptical style has not lessened his influence on his generation, and the same thing is true of Ruskin in spite of his literary pyrotechnics. Why, if mannerisms were all in all, these two great lights would be out of the firmament on account of their seedy grammar. On the contrary, the peculiarities of their styles are elements of their governing force. The truth is, dramatic journalism is sheer astray with its flashy canonical requirements. It exacts, for one thing, that the sculptor should never rise superior to his callipers, no more than that he shall not descend below the level of the stonemason, and that the legalised tape should be the final referee. Of course, the dramatic critics have never looked at their canons in that light, for, equally of course, they would long ago have given them up, seeing that the actor, even more than the sculptor, cannot be in bondage to any man or to any man's canons whatever. Every one of us has his own way of going about, and his own manner of expressing himself by word and gesture. The boundless language of attitudes has in every one a fresh interpreter. By virtue of the thoughts within us and the flesh without us we are, necessarily, ourselves and no other, and have to be considered not in detail of mannerism but in our general aspect. David slew the braggart Philistine in the teeth of all established art and probability, and just because he felt the springs of what he could do with God's own endowments in him. One wonders how long a time the world is to take in learning the lesson that the Traditions of The Elders never yet made a lasting reputation nor saved a single soul. The question both in art and life is not whether you goggle but whether you have genius.

Henry Irving has answered that question pretty well in his own consecrated fashion. He is the conqueror of the human emotions through taking his own line. He plays his own *Hamlet* and his own *Louis the Eleventh*, and no other actor's. He has dared to be original with the gifts that are from heaven of his own, and responding fortune has cashed his hostages, as its way always is with commissioned and gifted people. And thus Mr. Irving, in the front rank of British actors, is also one of the greatest British preachers. With the courage and endurance that seem identical with his art-sense, he is preaching abiding truths before multitudes from day to day, and while as yet only 38 years! We are aware "preachers" may be objected to, but for the reason that we are one of the lapsed masses from the dramatic haunts we may be allowed to adhere to it.

A brief University career and the laying on of hands do not necessarily constitute, though they customarily do, men as preachers. Nature is the greatest of all preachers, though it is not a graduate of either Oxford or St. Andrew's; and the same is true of Art and Science, even though those ministering at their altars have risen from their ranks with never a walk through the academic groves. We Press men and pulpiteers have been trying our hands with the world for a long time now, and with no particular success, as must be confessed by all who are familiar with our gaols and workhouses and bank crises. The moment would seem to have come for taking the actor into partnership with us, for there is as real an inspiration in the playwright's narrative as there is in the historical page, or in the Psalmist's minstrelsy.

Within this sphere of definition Henry Irving is a great preacher. He brings poor toiling mortals from their grime and soot, and grinds into his own ideal world, whence, as from any Mount Pisgah, they may see the ultimate spiritual land. In *Louis the Eleventh* they witness a hideous triumph of the actor's art in its showing how poor a figure human nature cuts with its falsehood of extremes. And who can fail of the impression that the wretched King's last word, "Pray," should be the earliest and the constant word of everybody who would avoid anything of his detestable hypocrisy, his ingenious self-seeking, his abnormal cruelty, and his prodigal falsehood? It is impossible that the thousands who see Mr. Irving's *Louis the Eleventh* can retire indoors without reflections which elevate and purify, for nothing, we affirm, is lost of contact with true Art. The Divine Life is in it, as it is in everything which the Divine hand has fashioned, and the thing wanting is not its hold on men

but men's hold on it by their not going into its fellowship enough. Every picture, every play, every sonnet, and every oratorio may truly be defined to be Art-Missionaries, with stores of nameless delights in their wallets, which do not, like bank shares, perish in the using. We would rather trust for moral results to a single representation of *Louis the Eleventh* than to a century of exertions by any propaganda. The representation is a work of Art by a man to whom life and death are very solemn things, and is no gasconading hulliballoo by religious sectaries. The baptismal fires are in it of an affectionate enthusiasm and a pious design, and, therefore, is the representation a very real thing to all real folk.

We are not criticising, the reader will see; we are dealing exclusively with the character and the effects of Mr. Irving's own Art. The camp of Israel did not ask David how the thing was done—at least it is not so recorded of them; they noted merely the surprising tragedy, and were glad with the new knowledge. Saul's must have been a glorious armour, but the stripling declined it; in like fashion the *Louis the Eleventh* of the late Charles Kean. It was a work of histrionic skill, but Mr. Irving never seems to have seen it, for he has exceeded its merits and wrought his study out on a new model. And that leads directly to *Hamlet*, in which part, as in that of *Louis the Eleventh*, Mr. Kean—so far as the present writer, among the lapsed masses, is concerned—was Mr. Irving's immediate predecessor. Here again the armour has been declined, and the dramatic canons been lightly regarded. It is a great representation, and worthy of the best days of the British stage. It is also, we must point out, for the sake of our essential thesis, a powerful, teaching scene. It is teaching on the sovereign authority and mandate of Shakspere, who seems to have been of Calvin's and Jonathan Edward's way of thinking about the Divinity that shapes our ends, without a grain of their irreverent piety.

What *Hamlet* was, or was intended to be, will remain in the mists with the secret of Hegel. We are on surer ground in saying that he is a moving discourse, having a royal word for every human emotion. One looks through *Hamlet's* soliloquies in the feeling that he is looking at the other world and the whitherward, which he could see but for the fleshly cerements. They, somehow, come into existence and the space of us as the flowers in the fable did in the footsteps of the fabled god. A wierd haze, as from the other side of life, is on the ramparts for the reception of the ghostly visitant, while that light which never was on sea or shore makes the night and the day, and the dawn and the mirk, of the far-seeing Dane.

Mr. Irving's marked success in the part is probably due to his own tender, his own intense, love of it. His susceptible fancy and his art-sense see, we imagine, an enrapturing tracery of spiritual writing in these unsurpassed soliloquies. It must be with a strangely pious suspense that he walks with *Hamlet* into the universe of the Unseen, there conversing with the enfranchised ghost, and thence coming back again into the sad, and perplexing, and weary home of earthly Elsinore. In all this there must be a great reward to the actor. His companionship with the ghost must for the moment transfigure his whole intellectual life, and, by way of counterpoise, hinder physical nature in the five acts from imposing a terrible exhaustion. To feel as *Hamlet* felt, to see as *Hamlet* saw, with all their contingencies of scourging melancholy and brooding sorrow, is, we should say, at once a special inheritance, a gracious inspiration, and an enthralling recompense. Anyhow, the result is before us in a *Hamlet*, which is the conception of ardent love, of rare enlightenment, and of artistic sagacity.

We are not unlikely here on the border-land of where the secret of Mr. Irving's dramatic fascination is. There has been belief in himself all the while; admiration of his Art all along; and the courage with them to hold on. But there has been something more. The accompaniments, resembling, in their beauty, the 'Cello accompaniments to "Be thou Faithful" in Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*, have been a pure life and a nobly-cherished ambition. There is much in his acting that is not acting at all. The *Hamlet* is here, and so is the *Louis the Eleventh*. The flesh and blood are under our very eyes. The actor has projected himself into the characters, and the semblances are lost in the one individuality. There have been the intellectual assimilation and the emotional merging. There has been the effort of genius in the representation, but there has been more. The man has been acting out the aim that constantly is in his own daily life, and the Art-fascination is in the reflected integrity, the sincerity, and the purity of the personal career. That is speculation—of course, but sedate speculation is more useful than rattling criticism, and in the end the more accurate of the two, and then, success on the stage has never been attained recently by men of inadequate personal character. The noted falls have been from the pulpits, and in the bank parlours. The stage has constantly been distinguished as the resort of gentlemen, and the pleasure emerges here in realising how that in Mr. Irving as its chosen figure—after a career of victorious endurance—it has also got a favourite of society, for his courtesy, his self-withdrawal, his benevolence, and tranquil feeling.

We hardly envy him the tremendous responsibility that is on his shoulders. For good or evil he is fashioning the lives of men more than any of his contemporaries. The most influential member of his great profession, he is thereby in trust of a heavy charge. Each word he speaks, every gesture of his body, every facial expression is fraught with stimulus to hundreds of thousands in some direction or another. From his life the lives of great crowds are rebounding. He has a hope for the despairing; a rebuke for the base; a solace for the weary; and an illumination for those in the darkness. He owns the repertory, in brief, in which are the means, in words of fire, to exorcise the evil spirits from bad men's bosoms, and to raise the masses into that gracious plane of feeling where contact with Art and with the mighty thoughts of the poetic dead may do their perfect and refining work. In his hands are all these trusts, and, indeed, more. For there is, further, in them the language which Shakspere wrote to keep pure and undefiled, than which, surely, there could be no graver task for a thoughtful soul.

And thus as the Abstract and Chronicle of his time Mr. Irving needs himself to be supported not alone by the hands of applauding multitudes, who hang on his every phrase, but by the expressed sentiments and sympathies of all who have tongues to speak and pens to use, and who rightly think that Art being the handmaid of Religion, the co-operation of the twain should begin in earnest. For, in the words of Horace, and to put the case on no extreme footing—

"Populumque falsis dedocet uti vocibus;"

which, being interpreted, means that Henry Irving is "Instructing the people to forget false rumours and false impressions." Or, as Tennyson has it, in *his* "Palace of Art,"

> "Come, my friends, it is not yet too late to seek a newer world."

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